



George Steiner: the wisest of men
'My main gift has been a cosmic tactlessness'

31.07.2015/07.08.2015

Newsweek®

DEBT

**The world is
drowning in it**



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WHO KNOWS THE OTTO MAN?



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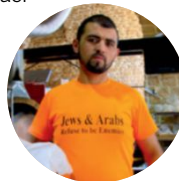
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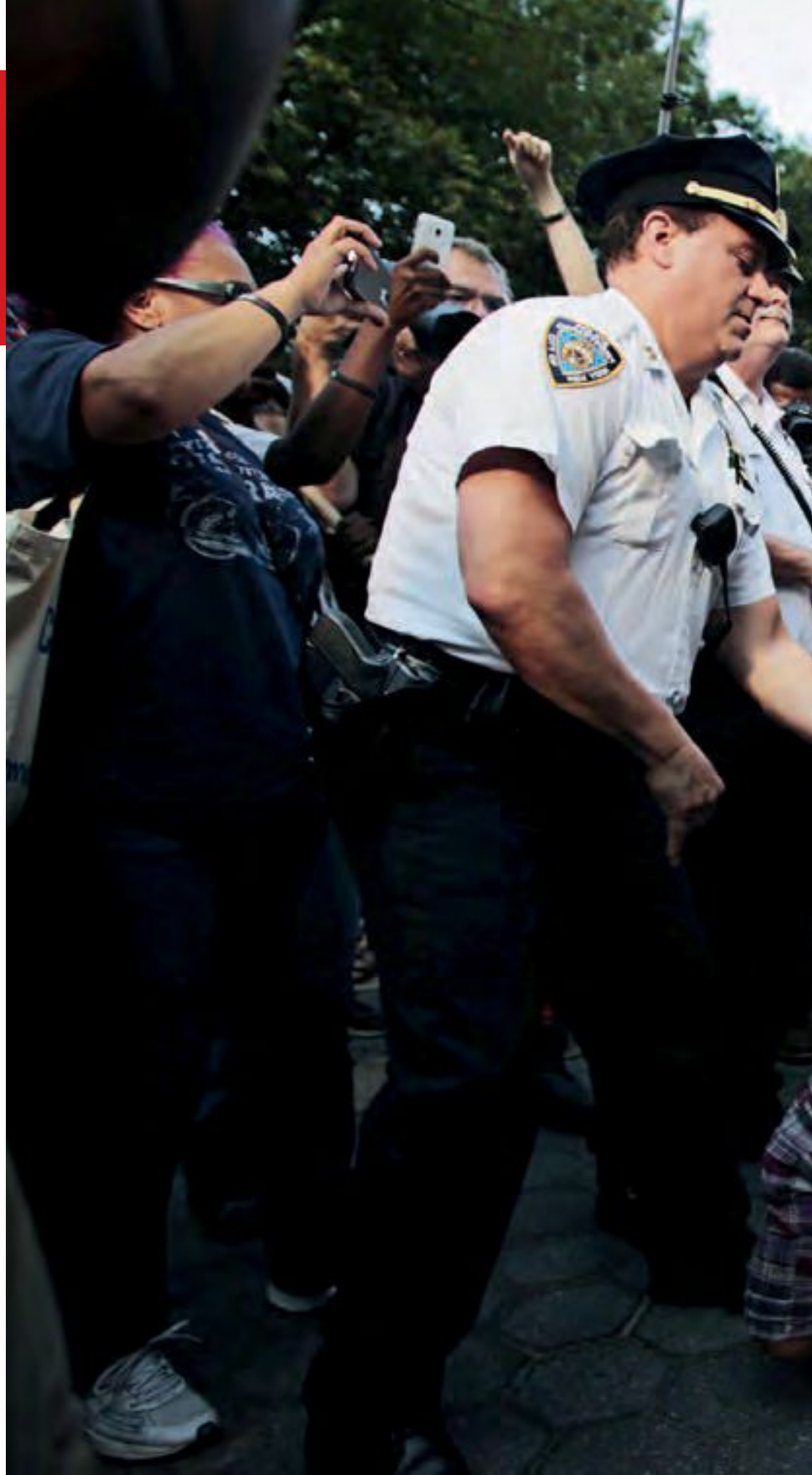
Big shots

USA

On your knees

A man is detained by New York Police Department officers during a rally marking the anniversary of the police killing of Eric Garner in Staten Island last year. Garner's family and supporters on Friday marked the occasion with rallies and vigils demanding police reforms and justice in the controversial case.

Photograph: Eduardo Munoz/Corbis









Greece

Up in smoke

A helicopter carrying firefighters flies above smoke billowing over Athens, as firemen battled a brush fire in north-eastern Athens, and another wildfire in the southern Peloponnese peninsula, that prompted the evacuation of five villages. More than 120 firefighters had been dispatched to the area, supported by 50 fire engines, four aircraft and two helicopters, officials said.

Photograph: Andreas Solaro/Getty

Big
shots

Burundi

Hitching a ride

Cyclists hang on to the back of a truck outside Burundi's capital Bujumbura. Each day scores of cyclists make the 45km downhill journey at breakneck speed from Bugarama to sell bananas, often hanging from the back of trucks for the return uphill trip.

**Photograph: Mike Hutchings/
Corbis**



Big
shots







China

Flashdance

Fireflies give off flashes of light as they dance outside the Linggu Temple in Nanjing, capital of east China's Jiangsu Province.

Photograph: Xinhua News Agency/
eyevine

Big
shots

Iran

The mysterious and notorious nuclear arms dealer who has become China's man in Tehran

Jeff Stein Washington

🐦@SpyTalker

Somewhere on the grimy streets of an industrial city in northeastern China walks one of the world's most dangerous men. Stocky and fleshy-faced, with a mole on his upper lip, Li Fangwei keeps a low profile and operates under a half-dozen aliases. Li's business requires discretion: he sells advanced missile and nuclear technology and materials. To Iran.

Indicted in New York last year for Iran sanctions-busting and money laundering, Li - known in the West as Karl Lee - operates out of Dalian, the Yellow Sea shipping centre formerly known as Port Arthur. Once talkative, he no longer answers his phone. Employees at half a dozen of his companies contacted by *Newsweek* say they've never heard of him.

But Lee is well known to US officials and arms control specialists. To them, he's second only to AQ Khan, the notorious Pakistani scientist who gave Iran, North Korea and Libya road maps to the bomb. "AQ Khan is in a class by himself," says Robert Einhorn, a top former nonproliferation official in the Clinton and Obama administrations. "But if Khan occupies places 1, 2, 3 and 4, then Karl Lee is clearly No 5 ... He's done a lot of damage." Other analysts agree. "Karl

Lee's importance as a supplier to Iran's missile programme can't be overstated," says Nick Gillard, an analyst with Project Alpha at King's College London, which has closely tracked Lee's transactions. "If you were to take apart an Iranian missile, there's a good chance you'd find at least one component inside that's passed through Lee's hands."

In recent years, Gillard says, Lee has graduated from selling technology and advanced metals made elsewhere to becoming a producer of "highly sensitive missile guidance components such as fiber-optic gyroscopes, making the leap from middleman to high-tech manufacturer."

Which makes him a wild card in the sweeping arms deal with Iran that extends the ban on selling ballistic missiles and parts to Iran for another eight years. If China can't - or won't - control him, Congress will never vote to lift sanctions on Iran, predicts Senator Mark Kirk of Illinois, a leading Republican hawk. "While this administration may temporarily waive some Iran sanctions laws to advance flawed negotiations, Congress will never vote to permanently repeal these laws until the Iranian regime's nuclear ballistic missile and terror threats end once and for all," Kirk tells *Newsweek*.

But there's the rub. Starting with the Clinton administration over a decade ago, China's response to behind-the-scenes protests from US officials over Lee's activities has ranged from "never heard of him" to "go fish", according to present and former officials. And that remains unchanged, judging by Beijing's response to an inquiry about Lee from *Newsweek* in June. In a prepared statement, the spokesman for China's Washington embassy insisted Beijing takes proliferation of weapons of mass destruction "seriously", but declined to comment on Lee.

The Obama administration began ratcheting up pressure on Lee last year, designating more of his companies for sanctions, hanging a \$5m reward on his head and issuing an Interpol "red notice" for his arrest if he travels outside China. The FBI also seized \$7m of his assets and issued a "wanted" poster with a blurry picture of the smirking, tousle-haired 43-year-old. As fast as they hit Lee's operations, however, he closes them and pops up under new names and accounts.

Many officials say it's time to castigate China publicly for protecting Lee and demand that it turn him over for prosecution. "It's way past time for naming and shaming," says Einhorn, who discussed

Lee personally with Chinese officials during the Clinton administration.

Presented with the opportunity to do just that this month, however, Obama administration officials demurred. The State Department official responsible for nonproliferation declined an interview request. The Justice Department refused to say whether the US has formally asked China to turn over Lee. And a senior administration official, speaking strictly on a not for attribution basis, said only that the US and China "continue to deepen" their "co-operation on



Wanted: the US has put a \$5m reward on Karl Lee's head and seized \$7m of his assets



Enemy of the States: to US officials, Karl Lee's supplying Iran's missile programme ranks second only to AQ Khan, above, the Pakistani nuclear scientist who gave Iran, North Korea and Libya road maps to the bomb

nonproliferation and counterproliferation issues". To be sure, he says: "the United States continues to consider Karl Lee a priority proliferation threat."

That was it. The administration was reluctant, of course, to say anything that might complicate the Iran nuclear talks at the last moment. Now that an accord has been reached, however, Lee's dealings give Washington hawks another chance to hammer the White House. Proof of China's intractability, they say, can be seen in how little US law enforcement officials know about Lee's family, education, party connections and lifestyle - a reflection of how they've been stonewalled by their Chinese counterparts. By tracking his commercial transactions, however, they think they've identified companies registered under the names of his father, Li Guijian, and two brothers, Li Fangchung and Li Fangdong. But where did Lee get his

technical and business expertise? Where did he learn to speak English? They don't know. Is he living large, like Pablo Escobar? They don't think so, although they say he's fond of luxury cars and nice suits. That's it. Beyond his business dealings, he's a cypher. "We have worked on him a long time," says Matthew Godsey, a Chinese-speaking senior research associate at the Wisconsin Project, chuckling. "It's hard to pin down who he is personally."

Investigators know Lee was born in Heilongjiang, a province bordering on Manchuria, in 1972, when China was being turned upside down by the ultra-Leftist Cultural Revolution. By the time he was in high school, however, the country was well on the road to exuberant, state-guided capitalism, aided by its nascent ties with the United States. But how Lee made the leap from the rustic far northeast to the booming port city of Dalian to world-

class notoriety as Khan's heir in the black market nuclear-arms business remains a mystery - at least in Washington. One US government investigator says Lee had a grandfather who was a "legendary colonel in the People's Liberation Army" during the Korean War, which probably helped.

By the early 2000s, Lee was "connected," as gangsters say. A classified 2008 State Department cable obtained by WikiLeaks described him as "a former government official who has been using his government

connections to conduct business and possibly protect himself from Beijing's enforcement actions."

"If you're trying to think though why the Chinese don't [stop] with this guy," says a congressional staffer who spoke freely of Lee but on condition of anonymity, "there are two explanations and possibly more. One, they like what he's doing - and you have to ask why. Or two, he's got to be paying people off. That's the Chinese way of doing business."

But many Lee-watchers think he's Beijing's man in Tehran, a very useful cutout for arms sales, a "private businessman" they can pretend is freelancing. With the prospect of sanctions being lifted in the wake of the nuclear arms accord, so this thinking goes, that could put China at the head of the line in the Iran arms bazaar.

Meanwhile, most experts laugh when asked about the prospect of China ever handing over Lee for prosecution. He has made himself virtually irreplaceable to both Beijing and Tehran, if only because of "the amount of time that Iran has invested with him", a federal investigator says. "The degree of tradecraft that he has used makes him a seasoned veteran," he adds, referring to Lee's skill in working through dozens of fronts under multiple aliases. "It takes time to develop somebody else like him, and clearly he's able to act freely within China. So you've got someone who can move freely, who has been trained for over a decade and uses really good tradecraft. That's kind of hard to replace."

Two Numbers

1.1 million

number of UK users of Ashley Madison, the adultery site which had all its user data stolen this week

128,701

number of divorces in UK in 2012/13, the latest year for which figures are available

India-Pakistan

After 45 years in Pakistan, India's "Missing 54" prisoners of war could be coming home

Alastair Sloan

✉@AlastairSloan

Nila Gosh was just eight months old at the time, but her mother has recounted this story many times. There Nila's father was - hands clasped around the bars of a prison cell, the smart cuffs of his military jacket replaced with a rough sweater, his moustache still neatly trimmed - staring out from a grainy black and white photograph in *Time* magazine.

The official story was that Major Arskok Gosh had been killed during fierce fighting the year before. Yet there he was, behind bars in a Pakistani prison, and alive.

Time was reporting on the messy end of a bloody 14-day conflict between Pakistan and India; a military disaster for the Pakistani state which saw Eastern Pakistan, later to become an independent Bangladesh, entirely lost.

A clutch of Indian military personnel were captured during the hostilities. The bulk were swiftly released. Yet the so-called "Missing 54", Major Gosh among them, have never been set free. That war ended in 1971, and the 54 captured Indians - whose existence is still denied by the Pakistani

authorities, whom the Indian government seems in no hurry to recover, and whose families still hope will return - are still missing.

Earlier this week, to try to break this decades-long deadlock, two British human rights lawyers, Jas Uppal and Christopher Wing, flew to Delhi to begin legal proceedings on behalf of the families at the Indian Supreme Court. They will argue that the dispute should be taken out of both Indian and Pakistani government hands and passed to the International Court of Justice in The Hague for

arbitration. Both India and Pakistan recognise the jurisdiction of that Court, which is backed by the United Nations Security Council.

"The Indian authorities have prevaricated for over four decades and failed to raise the matter at an international level," argues Uppal, a British-Indian of Punjabi origin. "These families have been living in purgatory for 45 years."

After the war, the exchange of each sides' prisoners-of-war became a bitter and highly politicised dispute. Ninety thousand captured Pakistani troops represented a third of

the country's ground forces and paramilitary groups, and were only handed back after Pakistan was forced to sign a humiliating peace agreement.

"India was just so happy with the victory, maybe they were overlooked?" Major Gosh's daughter Nila observes, "And if they were released now it would be a huge embarrassment for both countries."

Though Islamabad won't admit Pakistan holds the missing men, Pakistani state radio stations have on several occasions during and since the war alluded to their existence - broadcasting across the border into India. One such case was Wing Commander Hersern Singh Gill, a fighter pilot whose Mig-21 was shot down over Pakistani territory on 13 December 1971. That same day, the Pakistani military bragged it had captured an "ace Indian pilot".

Some of the families have been tracked down by former inmates in Pakistani prisons, saying they had spent time with the missing men while inside. Like the photo of Major Gosh turning up in *Time*, a photo of another missing soldier - Captain Ravinder Kaura - made its way to India, and was published by a local paper in



Interrogated: Indian POWs being questioned by a Pakistan officer, 1971

Perspectives

Norway

A woman has died a year after being given three times the recommended amount of a chemotherapy drug instead of antidepressants. Reidun Hansen died in April from 20mg of Methotrexate. The hospital's CEO said: "It is a very sad event, which we regret strongly."

Germany

The skull of famous film director Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau - the mastermind behind the cult horror film - *Nosferatu*, has been stolen from a grave in Germany, 84 years after his death. Wax residue at his tomb fuelled suspicions the robbery may have been part of an occult ceremony.

France

More than 700 cars were torched during this month's preparations for the anniversary of the storming of the Bastille, says the Interior Ministry. The figure, 721, is a 23% increase on 2014. Burning cars is widespread practise in France during national protests and celebrations.

Italy

The tomb of Italy's best-known poet, Dante Alighieri, could be subject to an Isis-inspired attack, due to the depiction of the Prophet Mohammed in Dante's *Divine Comedy*. The tomb, in Ravenna, has been put on a list of possible targets and may now get increased police protection.



Still hoping: Indian nationals show pictures of missing relatives after a news conference in Islamabad

1972. One family even received a note directly from their missing loved one, smuggled out by a released detainee.

More worryingly, British historian Victoria Schofield wrote in her book *Bhutto - Trial and Execution*, that prisoners in a Pakistani jail had heard men being tortured, men they believed to be The Missing 54. "Their screams and shrieks in the dead of night are something I will not forget," reads a chilling testimonial. Still, with no formal confirmation from the Pakistani government, decades of not knowing has taken its toll on the families.

"He was so patriotic," Captain Kaura's sister says, handing me a framed photo of her brother, handsome and resplendent in uniform, as we sit in her home in north London. The last time she saw him was when he dropped her off at the airport for a flight to the United Kingdom, where she was to marry. "He had already

done two tours," she says, "he insisted on doing a third, he shouldn't have gone." Mrs Kaur doesn't hesitate for a second when I ask if she thinks her brother is still alive - "Of course!"

Yet earlier, when we arranged to meet on the phone, she had broken down in tears. In the four and a half decades her brother has been missing, Mrs Kaur saw her father go blind, then die with his wife in 1982. Her other brother died two years later, in ethnic violence which gripped northern India. Mrs Kaur herself is wheelchair bound, after a car accident. She tells me that when, not if, her brother returns, she will buy him a house in India so he can retire. "I could bring him to the UK, but he fought for India," she explains.

The families complain the Indian government has not done enough. Eight years after the conflict ended, authorities finally published a list of 40 missing personnel, admitting

the men could be being held by the Pakistanis. A further 14 were later added to the list. While Pakistan is probably holding them to make a point or as political leverage, Delhi are not keen to rock an uneasy relationship with its counterparts in Islamabad - with frequent border skirmishes still flaring up.

A formal commission was formed to investigate the cases in 2008, but took four years to even interview the families of the missing. Since then the commission has been unenthusiastic and ineffective. Direct approaches to various senior Army and Air Force personnel by the families have been met with indifference.

"Evidence shows these men were last in the custody of Pakistan. Their government must be held to account too," adds lawyer Uppal. A date for the final decision by the Supreme Court in Delhi has yet to be set.

If I ruled the world



Yasmin Alibhai-Brown

Yasmin Alibhai-Brown is a Ugandan-born journalist and broadcaster. Her most recent books, *Refusing the Veil* and *Exotic England*, are on sale now.

One law I would pass?

I would end all state-funded religious schools. They're a terrible thing for this nation to be funding. Religion belongs with the family and the home and in churches and temples.

Who I'd ennoble?

I wouldn't, I hate the whole bloody thing. It's so corrupt and so wrong. It's all to do with inherited privilege.

One thing I would ban?

I'd ban all smacking in all situations.

Who I'd send to Siberia?

Iain Duncan Smith and George Osborne. They're the most cruel haters of poor people. I'd send them both off with very light jumpers.

Where I'd build my palace?

I don't believe in palaces. I love my little flat in Ealing which I've had since 1978. I have no aspirations to live in a bigger, better, grander place. I don't understand this thing about wanting anything bigger.

The book every child should read?

All the books by Janine Amos were so important as my little girl was growing up. They're little moral stories, beautifully illustrated for children to think about important things and remember them.

Europe

Far-Right politicians court Jewish groups for a joint anti-Muslim hate campaign

Conor Gaffey

✉@ConorGaffey

Right-wing European political parties described as “fig-leaf racists” are seeking to sow religious discord in Europe by asking Jewish organisations to collaborate in “hating” Muslims.

Speaking to *Newsweek* on condition of anonymity, a senior figure in one of Europe’s largest Jewish organisations revealed that their group has been approached in the past year by far-Right MEPs, including members of the Austrian Freedom Party, offering to “be friends with Jews” if Jewish groups “help us in our fight against Muslims”.

Marine Le Pen and other far-Right politicians recently met Vadim Rabinovich, the chairman of the European Jewish Parliament (EJP), drawing condemnation from European Jewish leaders. But the source says the far Right’s attempts to woo Jewish groups are far from new and that representatives of various parties have attempted to court their group. The source emphasises that all approaches have been flatly refused.

“One of the arguments they used is to say, ‘You know, those who try to fight you, they are the exact same people that we try to fight against, so you have to understand our fight and join us and together we will hate them’. But we have nothing against Muslims,” says the Jewish source, adding that far-Right parties are seeking “a certificate of honesty” for their Islamophobic campaigns.

In the meeting chaired by Le Pen, Rabinovich met 10 representatives of the Europe of Nations and Freedom, a bloc of nationalist parties in the European Parliament formed



“Fig-leaf racists”: Heinz-Christian Strache’s Austrian Freedom Party is part of the bloc behind the talks

in June. The bloc includes the Austrian Freedom Party, whose leader Heinz-Christian Strache was criticised for posting a cartoon condemned as anti-Semitic on his Facebook page. The party’s former leader, Jörg Haider, described the Nazi concentration camps as merely “penal camps” and referred to SS officers as “upstanding men of character”.

Along with the Front National and former Ukip MEP Janice Atkinson, the bloc also includes Italy’s Northern League, whose leader Matteo Salvini has vehemently opposed the building of more mosques in the country, despite there being only a handful of places of worship for the country’s 1.5 million Muslims, and the Party for Freedom, a Dutch

Right-wing party led by Geert Wilders, who said earlier this year that Europe is “at war” with Islam after terrorist attacks in Paris killed 17 people.

The meeting drew criticism from prominent Jewish leaders and led to one member of the EJP, French rabbi Levi Matusof, resigning after the meeting, which he called “opportunistic and inappropriate”.

The European Jewish Association, which claims to be the biggest federation of Jewish organisations in Europe, says the EJP risked “magnifying the problem” of anti-Semitism by “giving a platform to those seeking to spread messages of hate”.

Dr Moshe Kantor, president of the European Jewish Congress, said he was shocked

that the EJP met with “fig leaf racists and anti-Semites” and added: “It goes without saying that these people [the EJP] are as unrepresentative of the vast majority of European Jews as this collective of Le Pen’s MEPs is of the vast majority of European citizens.”

In a statement on the EJP’s website, Rabinovich said he was “very surprised” by the negative reaction from other Jewish groups.

“The meeting with the [Europe of Nations and Freedom] opens the new dialogue, which, in our firm conviction, is what Europe needs today - a dialogue of everybody with everyone, in order to preserve peace and tolerance and combat anti-Semitism in Europe,” said Rabinovich.

HERWIG PRAMMER/CORBIS

Beauty queen and vigilante female hackers declare online war on Isis

Felicity Capon

✉@felicitycapon

A nearly all-female online vigilante hacker group, which boasts a former Jordanian beauty queen among its ranks, has vowed to eliminate Isis's online presence to disrupt the group's capacity to organise terror attacks.

Ghost Security, or GhostSec was formed in the wake of the terrorist attacks against the *Charlie Hebdo* offices in Paris in January. The group works to disrupt the recruitment and communication abilities of the jihadi group, as well as "collecting threat intelligence to prevent terror attacks from becoming a reality". It also contacts intelligence organisations when it learns of a potential terror threat.

On one such occasion, a few days before the 4 July weekend, GhostSec alerted the FBI and CIA to a tweet by an Isis supporter who appeared to hint at a terror attack on US soil. Days later, the FBI announced it had foiled attacks planned around the holiday, and arrested more than 10 people who were inspired by Islamic State's online recruitment.

One of the hackers is Lara Abdallat, a former Miss Jordan and a runner-up in the 2011 Miss Arab World pageant, who decided to join the group after Islamic State soldiers burned a Jordanian pilot alive inside a cage in February.

"I think people find it interesting and inspiring that a former beauty queen and a woman has engaged in war with the Islamic State," Abdallat tells *Newsweek*. "However I also feel that Isis puts everyone at risk and therefore it does not matter if you are male or female but rather the fact that we must

come together for the common cause of destroying Isis."

According to one of the group's hackers, who goes by the name of DigiShadow: "Enough was not being done by the governments of the world to combat the insidious threat of the Islamic State, thus we decided to dedicate ourselves to eliminating their online presence as much as possible."

The group, which is made up of around 12 mostly female hackers based in the US and Europe, has to date shut down more than 55,000 Islamic State Twitter accounts and terminated over 100 websites. More than 1,000 YouTube propaganda videos have also been removed.

The websites were taken down through DDoS (distributed denial of service) attacks, which involve directing

traffic from hundreds of thousands of compromised computers at the same time so that the traffic overwhelms a website, says Caroline Baylon, a Research Associate in Cyber Security at the London-based Royal United Services Institute. She calls the attack a "very basic tactic but highly effective".

GhostSec also claims that its strong female presence helps it take down extremist Twitter accounts, as women are more adept at gaining the confidence of online jihadis. "We feel that females have a critical role in these operations due to their ability to extract information from the enemy without using force," says DigiShadow, explaining that female hackers "serve as spies and are embedded with the enemy to gain sensitive information".



Warrior beauty queen: Lara Abdallat wants to destroy Isis

The week ahead

Monday 27 July

Former Fifa vice-president Austin Jack Warner, charged with 12 corruption-related offences including money laundering and racketeering, re-appears in court in Trinidad. His lawyers can officially ask that he be discharged unless the US law enforcement authorities file a last-minute extradition request.



Tuesday 28 July

Japan will begin dismantling the protective cover around the disaster-stricken Fukushima reactor, put in place to prevent the spread of dangerous particles after the devastating 2011 earthquake. Previous attempts to dismantle the cover on the reactor have been halted by technical failures.

Wednesday 29 July

Microsoft launches its new operating system, Windows 10, across 190 countries in 111 languages. The first round of upgrades will affect 4.4 million of the most eager users, who have pre-registered for it, while other Windows customers will receive the update more gradually. This is billed by Microsoft as its last ever major Windows release and will span all Microsoft devices.

Saturday 1 August

Russia's first International Army Games kick off, pitting teams of servicemen from 15 countries against one another in unconventional military challenges such as "Tank Biathlon" and acrobatic manoeuvring of fighter jets – "Aviadarts". Teams from China, India, Serbia, Kuwait and others are due to take part in the 14 events.





**Adam LeBor
in Budapest**

✉@adamlebor

Politics

The West's failure to act has deepened Syria's civil war agony

“

You cannot predict the consequences of intervention, but sometimes you have to take the risk when civilian lives are being lost

Four years and four months after the start of the Syrian civil war, Europe and the West are floundering. The country has collapsed. More than 215,000 people have been killed and almost half the population has been displaced. The United Nations says that Syria is the “biggest humanitarian emergency of our era”. Horrific chlorine attacks against civilians continue, say Syrian doctors. Despite this President Bashar Assad remains in power.

“There is no strategic vision for the future of Syria except that the refugee crisis now poses a European problem,” says Middle East analyst Eyad Abu Shakra, of *Asharq Al-Awsat*, an Arabic newspaper. Julian Lewis, a senior British Conservative MP, seems to agree; he accused David Cameron, the British prime minister, of making up Syria policy “on the hoof”, after it was revealed that UK pilots had taken part in missions against Isis over Syria, when parliamentary authorisation had only been given for operations in Iraq. This month has special resonance: 20 years ago, in July 1995, Dutch UN peacekeepers stood by as Bosnian Serbs took away 8,000 Muslim men and boys at Srebrenica. The men were murdered over the next few days, under the watchful gaze of Western satellites.

The lessons of Srebrenica are very clear, says Carne Ross, of Independent Diplomat, a diplomatic advisory group. “Doing nothing is a decision in itself, with consequences - in this case the continued mass killing of civilians, including with indiscriminate weapons such as barrel bombs and poison gas. You cannot predict the ultimate consequences of intervention, but sometimes you have to take the risk when civilian lives are being lost.”

There were other lessons from Bosnia that could have been applied to Syria, says Abu

Shakra, specifically the establishment of “safe havens”, where refugees would be protected, and “no-fly zones”. “These should have been the first and foremost step. They would have given a stern and clear message to all sides within Syria, as well as Assad’s backers, that the international community meant business.” Such steps would have increased the pressure on the Assad regime and heightened internal tensions, says Abu Shakra. “This would have speeded up desertions from the regime’s army, police and other civil and security agencies, and reassured the population. Alas, this did not happen and the result is now clear.”

A key turning point was the regime’s nerve gas attack in August 2013. The US and its allies were preparing to launch military strikes on the Assad regime. But the strikes were cancelled after the UK parliament voted against authorising military force. Syria agreed to destroy its chemical weapons and President Assad was instantly transformed from potential adversary to partner.

In Paris, at least, there are still regrets. “The feeling is that it has proved a mistake to give up on the potential use of military means against President Assad, which we had been threatening,” says a senior French official. “We had a very clear view that this gas attack was really beyond the pale. Everything was ready to go. The plan was that this would be a coalition but it started unravelling when Cameron was voted down and it was obvious we would not go alone.”

Airstrikes have aided the Kurds and the Yazidis but, across Syria, the slaughter of civilians continues. Assad has also benefited from the weakness of the Syrian opposition and the rise of Isis (Daesh), says the French official. “We have had a policy of trying to encourage the opposition for a long time, but it was not able to emerge as a powerful alternative force. This is not an excuse, but a fact of life. At the same time the emergence of Daesh has changed the picture a lot. You have what you did not have against Assad: a military coalition. The fight against Daesh has taken precedence. For all its faults, and as appalling as it is, the Assad regime is not coming at us directly, as is Daesh.”

The EU has taken in refugees and its sanctions against Syria are biting hard, says the French official. “The sanctions are something. They really harm the regime, but they do not change the situation on the ground.”



Deadly: a gas attack in Syria killed nearly 500

Business

Hi-tech

New earbud technology aims to give everybody hearing like Superman's

Kevin Maney New York

Twitter: @kmaney

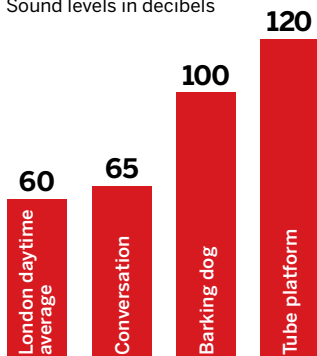
Ever since The Six Million Dollar Man displayed his bionic powers on 1970s TV, we've been talking about adding body parts that make us superhuman. These days, the most likely body part to get upgraded by mass-market technology is our ears. Our eyes lost out when Google Glass proved to be about as useful as a Segway, and almost as embarrassing to own.

Compared with boosters for legs, hands, noses or anything else, augmented hearing is closest to becoming accessible and common. This could first change the nature of live music, and later impact much bigger things, like cities, language and relationships.

Before the end of the year, start-up Doppler Labs plans to come out with a promising

Urban din

Sound levels in decibels



Active listening: wireless buds and a smart phone app by Here control what you hear and how

product called Here, oversized earbuds meant to give you control over live sounds. They filter and alter the real world around you. The early versions will have volume control and some noise cancellation, so you can put them in your ears and make city sounds less harsh while boosting conversations so they come through loud and clear. One Here setting is "Baby Suppress", which is meant to squash the sound of the crying kid behind you on a flight.

For an ageing population, augmented hearing buds could do some of the work of hearing aids, while feeling cooler to wear and costing one-tenth as much. The first Here buds will be less than \$300.

Doppler initially is aiming Here at lovers of live music. CEO Noah Kraft, a musician and audiophile, found it frustrating that the music sounded different in various areas of a live venue. Here buds will allow a user to adjust volume, bass

and effects such as reverb to customise a concert's sound. But Doppler and others working on augmented hearing don't plan to stop at music. Doppler has a vision for "a computer, speaker and microphone in every ear" and predicts that in 10 years people will wear these 24 hours a day. The company's grand plan includes mapping every point on earth for sound, so your buds could automatically optimise what you hear.

Imagine these buds with GPS, knowing that if you're home at 2am it should adjust to cancel the snoring next to you and the neighbour's barking dog.

Augmented hearing could change the economics of a major city, where noise has an impact on where people choose to live and work. If you could wear noise-cancelling buds all the time, you could live under a jet runway that's next to a bus depot. Doppler is not alone in chasing these ideas. You can

already buy sound-augmenting apps that use your smart phone as the mic and filter, pushing the altered sounds to your regular ear buds or

headphones. Ear Spy, for instance, markets its app as "the latest in personal espionage", letting you tune in a conversation from across the room.

High-end hearing aid makers have continually built more acoustic filtering into their devices. GN ReSound Linx has a mode meant for restaurants that turns down music and background noise and focuses on conversation. Such hearing aids, though, cost thousands of dollars and are marketed as medical products, not consumer gadgets.

Once you have a computer in your ear, it could do a lot of things your ears could never do. One idea is instant translation. Automated language translation is getting better all the time. A sound processor could catch Chinese coming in and send English into your ears. Language barriers would disappear.

Another idea is to allow us to hear wavelengths. Colour is a wavelength we see but can't hear - but what if you could hear green? Imagine the impact on the colourblind. Or what if you could hear infrared, essentially letting you see in the dark through your ears?



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**Two of a kind**

Munich introduces pedestrian crossing signals showing gay male and female couples.

Middle East**Russia jets past West to replace Iran's planes**

Felicity Capon London

✉@felicitycapon

After world powers announced this week that they had agreed to lift financial sanctions on Iran, Russia has already begun talks to sell much-needed passenger jets to the Islamic Republic, whose ancient planes have led to thousands of deaths in the past three decades.

Russia's Transport Minister Maxim Sokolov has confirmed to reporters that talks between the two countries are under way, with Russia hoping to sell Sukhoi Superjet passenger planes to the Islamic Republic. Western companies, meanwhile, appear to have been left on the tarmac as they wait for the lifting of sanctions to be formalised.

The Superjet is the first passenger jet Russia has developed since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

"Such talks are being held," Sokolov tells reporters. "And not only Superjets but also other technology is being met with certain interest from our Iranian comrades."

Other international aviation companies, among them Boeing and Airbus, are likely to seek to enter the Iranian market, and competition could be fierce: the Iranians are looking to buy 400 new aircraft at a total cost of \$20bn, according to recent reports.

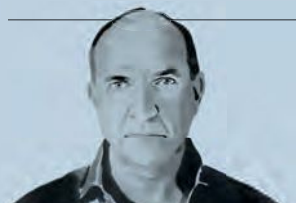
"There's no doubt there is huge potential, especially for Airbus and Boeing, to sell a large number of planes," says Adam Pilarski, an economist and aerospace consultant.

But in a statement Airbus says: "The agreement between Iran and the six nations has yet to be formalised and implemented. Once this takes place we will evaluate what commercial implications it has in strict compliance with the accord."

A Boeing spokesperson said: "We are reviewing the agreement and until the US Government gives us further direction, it would be premature to comment."

According to Planespotters.net, a German website that tracks aircraft, the average age of Iran's planes is 27 years. Chris Yates of Yates Consulting and one of the world's foremost experts on aviation safety says that as a result of the sanctions, Iran was forced for many years to look to the black market to purchase unofficial spare parts.

There have been more than 200 accidents involving Iranian planes in the past 25 years, leading to more than 2,000 deaths. "There is a heck of a need to bring in much more modern aircraft, and obviously the Russians are trying to steal a march on the West, now that the sanctions have been lifted," says Yates.

The smart money**New space age offers investors infinite opportunities to explore**

Rory Ross

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The final frontier is ripe for pillage. After much blue-sky thinking, the smart money has lit on, well, blue sky, or rather the dark stuff beyond it, as the next big play. Recent images of Pluto should be read as a hormone in the mating ritual between government funding and risk capital that will one day unlock opportunities galore in space. Three factors crystallise the investment argument for space: connectivity, data and private space.

First, connectivity. We crave it. Everywhere. All the time. The snag is that 4G and 5G networks offer incomplete coverage. Satellites plug the gaps with "top cover". Demand for connectivity drives sales of satellites. Top cover is vital for the internet-of-things and broadband-on-the-move. Any vision of a future of smart-enabled self-driving cars relies on top cover since such cars need broadband connection. Space will help meet these challenges – forever "on", always reliable and equally able to cascade data on us and our things wherever we are.

Europe's biggest supplier of satellites is Airbus Space & Defence. Several other organisations are promising to launch fleets of satellites to create omni-connectivity. Sir Richard Branson is a partner to the just-announced Oneweb which will connect all parts of the planet with 39 satellites. Elon Musk has said he will raise \$10bn to create his own space network.

Secondly, data, currency of the new space age. The data rained down by European Space Agency satellites Sentinel 1 and soon Sentinel 2 are throwing up opportunities in excelsis. Where would we be without GPS? Exactly. Galileo, Europe's answer to the present US-funded version, goes live in 2016, with a full constellation of satellites up by 2020 (22 of which will be built by Surrey Satellites in the UK). With sub-centimetre calibrations, GPS will enable autonomous transport systems, like cars that can team up with other vehicles on motorways to create fuel-saving "road trains".

Thirdly, private space, the longer-term bet. Nasa has

Space is forever 'on', reliable and can cascade data on us wherever we are

contracted two companies, one of them Musk's Space X, to launch satellites and service the International Space Station. These companies have pledged to cut the cost of launching hardware into space from the hundreds of millions down to the hundreds of thousands. Reusable launchers are part of this vision. Virgin Galactic's success will depend on satellite launches not space tourists.

Sceptics might see a new, irresponsible and largely illusory economic bubble forming in this unregulated milieu. Space X recently totalled a launcher during a demonstration. Virgin Galactic has suffered a fatal crash. The thought of a gold-rush mentality with skies darkening with plummeting dysfunctional hardware gives a terrifying twist to what economists call "real-world repercussions".

I have no right to be here ... There isn't a day that goes by that I don't recognise the enormous gift of living in a place like this.'

Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury



By Robert Chalmers

✉@Escartefigue777

There are three services a day here at Lambeth Palace, the Archbishop of Canterbury tells me. "Morning Prayer, at 8.40, Holy Communion at 12.30 and another in the evening, at 5.30."

Watching the news before I set off for his grand office, I tell him, I'd seen footage relating to the 500 children blown to pieces in Gaza last year, images from the Ukraine and a report on child abuse. It seemed legitimate to ask quite how effective the Archbishop believes the weapon of prayer to be.

"That's the question one always returns to. Prayer isn't a means of making things happen. If God exists, God is worth talking to and listening to. That's the simple way of putting it."

Welby has a reputation as a guy who enjoys a good laugh and discourages formality. His manner when I meet him is affable but circumspect. This is a man who once observed that he didn't want the top job and

was "one of the thicker bishops" in the Church of England.

"I can spot an old Etonian a mile off," I venture, "and your defining characteristic is precisely that kind of phoney diffidence."

"You should meet more bishops. There are very clever folk around."

Does he believe he was chosen by God?

"The church recognised that I was the appropriate person to be the next Archbishop."

"Meaning God, speaking via the church?"

"Yes," says Welby. "Probably. I hope so."

Archbishop Welby, 59, served an unusual apprenticeship, having worked for oil corporations including the French company ELF, in its infamous period of malpractice (illegality of which the future cleric was wholly unaware).

He has distinguished himself by his extreme bravery, notably in Africa, his empathy for the dispossessed (which prompted his recruiting credit unions to the so-called "War on Wonga") and his criticism of corruption in the City. He is no slave to tradition.

"Nobody I know calls me Your Grace. Normally it's Justin." And yet, he acknowledges, he is undeniably part of the British Establishment. I'd spent the previous day discussing Jack the Ripper: a case in which the widely perceived readiness of authority figures to shield an individual from the law has some resonance today.

"Jack the Ripper," Welby replies; "that was the 19th century."

"Some suspect there is still a hierarchy above the law. I was thinking of Jimmy Savile."

"If there is, I don't know about it. As regards child abuse, there is rigorous transparency."

Welby once remarked that leading Anglicans was like taking a cat for a walk. Given the church's divisions, I suggest, another analogy would be that of a man wearing roller skates, holding two leads: one restraining a panther, one a wildebeest.

The challenge, he believes, "is to acknowledge diversity and continue - as Christ instructed - to love one another".

For all his qualities, Welby isn't universally adored. I read out an email I'd received from a well-known writer the previous day.

"What kind of country appoints a middle-ranking oil man to the highest spiritual office in the land? Somebody who [associates with] corrupt bankers like [a financier, "X" who, *Newsweek's* lawyers inform me, would more prudently be described as a model of ethical perfection] or living in a palace when he represents a gospel of poverty?"

"That anger," Welby says, "has always been there. I spent 10 years in parishes on a very low income."

"Having once lived it up in your flat near the Louvre?"

"Absolutely."

"Is there a case for selling off this grandeur?"

"Yes," replies Welby. "But what would we do with the money? People say, 'Give the church's money away'. We do," he adds, with some warmth. We have [a thud as he strikes the table] 8,000 clergy working [thud] for communities [thud] day [thud] in and day out. We have [thud] chaplains in every regiment, [thud] every prison, [thud] every hospital. [Thud] Working their guts out. We pay them. That's giving money away. And calling [financier X] corrupt: I've seen no evidence of that."

"Imagine we voted for our state religion - or none - every five years. Would you be here?"

"I've no idea. It's an interesting point. In the sense that I have no right to be here."

"I'm not saying that."

"I am. I have no right to be here. [I am here] to proclaim the good work of Jesus Christ. There isn't a day goes by that I don't recognise the enormous gift of living in a place like this."

As we say goodbye, I tell Welby that I pondered giving him a masonic handshake, on the grounds that he must have received enough of them to recognise one. This impertinence is greeted with an old-fashioned look. I sense I'm unlikely to be asked back here for lunch.

That said, if an elected state church and leader ever transpires, this courageous, humane and thoughtful cleric would be my choice.



CONFESSIONS OF A WAR'S FALLEN WOMEN

Unearthed in the Scottish Highlands, an old shoe box holds the 100-year-old secrets of a generation of lonely and desperate illegitimate mothers confiding in an agony aunt who was not what she seemed

BY CAROLINE SCOTT IN SCOTLAND



Agony aunt: Mary Ann Brown with
granddaughter Morna Stewart

The letters were written in pencil on pages torn from notebooks, on scraps of paper, on the backs of receipts and shop order forms; towards the end of 1914, as the First World War unfolded, they began to arrive on the black-bordered note paper of the recently bereaved. They were addressed to Fanny Deane, agony aunt on the newly launched DC Thomson title *The Weekly Companion*, and they began simply: "Dear Friend..."

Sometimes the handwriting was beautiful copperplate script, but more often it was a barely decipherable, unpunctuated scrawl. Many of the letters were from domestic staff, who, late at night, spilled onto the page things they could not tell their families, if they had families to tell - and many did not.

Fanny Deane was a pseudonym used by Mary Ann Brown, a 25-year-old from a lower-middle-class background with few obvious qualifications for the job. According to her granddaughter Morna Stewart, who has inherited a shoebox filled with the letters, Mary left school at 14, then worked in the jute mills around Dundee.

"Granny liked to boast that she was the first 'editress' in the DC Thomson empire," says Morna. "She used to tell us that when she applied for a job at the age of 17, it was DC himself who interviewed her. 'How is it that you have such an old head on those young shoulders?' he asked."

When *The Weekly Companion* launched on 14 February 1914, joining a stable of other popular titles, including *My Weekly*, *Happy Home* and *Weekly Welcome*, Mary was given a full-page-spread - "Our Chat by the Fireside" - and promptly created a completely new identity for herself. As Fanny Deane, she was a middle-class woman of wisdom and means, a loving wife (her fictional husband was fighting bravely at the front) and mother to two adorable children, Eppie and Ernie. Her writing style was both invitingly intimate and saccharine, an approach

that her readers - mostly women, but she also had a loyal following of "lonely soldiers" - seem to have found hugely comforting.

"I am to add another to the long list of resolutions in my notebook, and it is this," Mary/Fanny began confidently: "I am to answer every letter within three days of receiving it, sooner if possible." It looks as though she was true to her word. Spreading out the contents of the shoebox 100 years later on Morna's kitchen table in Tarland, Aberdeenshire, the letters form long conversations conducted over many months, like a postal Facebook thread. Many of them are achingly sad and depressing. The writers were invariably pushed for time and often bone-weary, and, although the tone is relentlessly upbeat, the pages reek of desperation and loss.

'I go mad over her'

They wrote about social isolation: "I work in a shop from 8am until 10 at night. I am motherless and 16 years of age. When I want to go out I have no one to go with... Can you send me a girl's address?" And work: "I am a barmaid, a life which I hate. I work very long hours and only get out once a week. Mother is always raging at me for not speaking to the customers but I simply cannot do it as they are the most detestable rough sort of men." And about sexual confusion: "I am a kitchen maid here. There are three maids and a housekeeper. I feel as though I must tell someone or I shall scream. Since being here I have got very much in love with the housekeeper. Every time I touch her I feel as though I could put my arms around her and kiss her. She is so fascinating and kind I simply go mad over her. Sometimes I cry because I so want to be near her." It is a rare glimpse into the private lives of a generation still bound by the social constraints of the Victorian and Edwardian eras and now blindsided by war - the overwhelming impression is of exhaustion, isolation and unremitting loneliness.

During the autumn of 1914, when the letters begin, husbands, brothers and sweethearts were disappearing to the front. Slaughter on the battlefields resulted in a new awareness of the transience of human life, and the women they left behind wrote in their droves to their "friend" Fanny Deane for advice on the uncertain business of wartime sexual etiquette.

"Give the boys on leave a good time," was a universal sentiment, but there was much confusion over how that should be played out. "I should like you to tell me whether you think it is wrong to go to the Picture Palaces with a soldier boy who I may not see again," one asks. They wrote on the inconceivable shock of lost love: "He was hit by an enemy machine gun after taking part with his company in a chase to occupy a trench." And they wrote for help "placing" their illegitimate babies: "I am sorry to say that I have a little girl aged nine months that'll require to find a good home, the baby's father has gone to the war and will have nothing to do with the baby or myself." The press had a field day with the newly coined phrase "war babies". By 1918, illegitimacy was up by around 30% on pre-war figures, yet

'Dear friend I am grieved to tell you that my darling baby passed away 10 o'clock last night (Friday)'

'It is a pity he did not marry her before he went away...'

child adoption had no legal status in Britain until 1926, when the first act was passed in England and Wales, and in Scotland not until 1930.

'I am always afraid'

A reader wanting "a curly-haired little girl with a nice disposition" provoked a deluge of letters from young women. A letter from Florence Adams written on lined paper torn from a notebook and dated 15 February 1915 reads: "In last week's *Companion* I saw where you spoke of a home for a little baby girl ... If this offer is closed do you know of any other home or place to put a baby, she is now one year and 10 months old."

The same week, Lizzie Moore wrote: "I have a little girl, about three months old. I am trying to get someone to take her as I am only a factory worker earning 12/6 weekly ... and the baby's father can't be traced at all. I am always afraid of not doing the baby justice."

Mary clearly did her best to place the babies of domestic servants who couldn't keep them with better-off women who could and, as offers shot back and forth, there was no sense from anyone involved that this was iniquitous. Mrs Moore from Birmingham wrote: "I should like one from three years to five but I do want a nice healthy little one, I don't mind how poor as long as it doesn't have bad blood. Perhaps a soldier's child who has been killed - but I must have it all to myself. We are highly respectable and it would have a kind Christian home."

Mary, still only 25, and living at home in a creaky tenement with her mother, two younger sisters and a brother, was unlikely to have had first-hand experience of any of the above. But as Fanny Deane she was able to dispense crisp advice and comfort to the masses. None of her own letters survive but she tore out and kept a few of her columns. To "Newcastle Girl" she wrote: "I do wish I had you beside me dear, to have a long chat with you. You must not rush into intimacy just because you are lonely. Above all don't let your infirmity of speech stop you making friends. Do you take any interest in church work? Some of the finest ideas I have come to me in church. Write me again soon..."

According to Morna, "Granny was grumpy, argumentative, terminally mean and borderline Aspergic". Not much empathy then? "Oh, absolutely none! And she was pretty economical with the truth." Fanny was, however, a brilliantly clever construct and through her, Mary built relationships and sustained long pen-friendships that she may have had difficulty navigating as her real self.

'I need a friend'

In late September, Lucy Allen, a young girl in service in Clapham, south-west London, wrote to Fanny Deane with heartbreaking candour: "Dear Friend, at present, I need a friend. I am in trouble with my young man who has left me and gone to join the army and I expect my baby this month. I have tried to find a babys (sic) home where they are taken in for just small payments but cannot find one. I have neither mother nor father nor

anyone belonging to me whom I could look to for help. I am longing to receive a letter from you at your earliest convenience as I must have a baby's home before I give birth to my child."

Mary wrote to George Riddell, one time managing director of the *News of the World* and a friend of David Lloyd George, who replied on 15 October 1914: "I think I can get her into a home where I have some influence." He refers the case to a Mr Williamson who writes with arch detachment: "I presume she would only be walking out with the soldier? If so, she has no claim on any fund. If they had been living together and he had provided a home for her, she would have been entitled to relief from the Soldiers and Sailors Fund. It is a pity he did not marry her before he went away... The Government will not recognise cases of soldiers simply walking out with anyone, neither will any association. There are homes in London for such cases."

In 1914, maternity hospitals were reserved for married mothers only, but all over the country, there were refuge homes for unmarried mothers run by the Salvation Army and other missions existed in private houses.

The next letter from Allen is undated but she writes from a "hospital waiting home" for unmarried mothers, where she is only allowed to stay for 14 days: "You will be surprised to hear that I have given birth to a son. He was born on 10 October, it would be the same day you received my letter although I did not expect for another two weeks yet. He is a fine little son I am very proud of him and hate the idea of parting with him. He is brought into the world for something good or he would not have lived."

On 11 November, after receiving a "beautiful" letter from Mary, Lucy writes back to tell her that she has named her baby Wilfred Eric Allen. "I was so pleased to receive your letter of Wed and so pleased to tell you that both baby and myself are getting on very nicely indeed. He is such a darling little boy. I used to wish the child would be born dead but now it would break my heart to lose him. Sir George Riddell went to the hospital to visit me and left me £1. And left another £1 with the matron I was very grateful indeed. The money took a lot of worry from my mind."

The scandal of late Victorian baby-farming, where illegitimate babies were starved and left to die by unscrupulous foster carers, had shocked the nation and resulted in a series of acts of parliament designed to protect children such as Lucy's, but even well-intentioned fostering was precarious. Babies were fed cows' milk or sugar water and very often failed to thrive.

On Christmas Eve 1914, Lucy writes from Station Parade in Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, where she has taken a position as cook. She has found a foster carer for Wilfred Eric. "I am sorry to tell you my poor little Wilfred has been very very ill. Poor little soul, he only weighted 7lb 5oz when he was born but now he has wasted away to 5lb 3oz. The doctor told me I should have kept him and fed him myself. I told him I would love to have kept him but I could not as I was obliged to go out to work. I have now

Mr. N. Johnson
44 Whitehall
Parliament
St. James's

My Dear Friend

I am sending
you my photo with
which I do not like but
as I promised you one
I don't not like to disappoint
you. I don't not
hear from my lovely
A. & L. I wish

In need of a friend: a spinster in London's East End sends her photo "which I do not like" while a Scottish mother, right, is "very lonely in this world" after losing her child and husband

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changed the foster mother ... and I must hope for the best that he will live and grow."

The shoebox only gives one side of the correspondence so we cannot know how Mary viewed their relationship, but to Lucy, Fanny Deane's life must have seemed enviably stable. In February, she is keen to know more about Mary's "new baby". "When you write again will you tell me about your little girl and what her name is and her age?" In March, she writes: "You have such a sweet little name for her I really think Joy is a fine name for a little girl."

In the *Companion*, Mary gave full vent to her imagination. "Amongst my letters this week was one from a woman whose simple account of how she makes her husband's wages keep the home going is one of the most grandly inspiring things I have ever read. I took it to my husband and read it to him. He put his arm round my waist when I'd finished. 'It's a wonderful magic you women practise,' he said. With more gravity than is usual with him."

'If only I was married'

The *Companion* often came with paper sewing patterns: "a useful blouse" or "a fashionable child's apron". Romantic fiction featured heavily, with serials appearing over several weeks, including "Little Meg or Homeless on the Streets of London", "The Adventures of Polly Bright" (a muffin seller who stole men's hearts) as well as competitions and articles on cooking, sewing and knitting.

"I sent a cookery hint to the address you gave me and while writing this received a very nice blouse which I was very pleased with..." Lucy writes: "Wilfred, my darling babe now four

months old, is a little better and I have just finished making his underclothing."

Although Lucy often struggles to find enough money to pay the foster carer, she rarely complains and is bursting with pride in her little son. "I am pleased to tell you my dear Eric is a little better," she writes on 12 March. "He weighs in at 8lb 11oz. He was five months old yesterday. When I went to see him last Wednesday he laughed so sweet and he was so pretty. His hair was quite black when he was born but now he has some new hair and I think it will be curly and so fair. When he gets a bit bigger I shall have his photo taken and you shall have one. If only I was married I would be so proud to take him and show him to all my relations and friends."

Birth control, although newly available, was hard to come by and illegitimacy was a pressing social concern, debated endlessly in Parliament. But attitudes, even among the young, were trenchant. Lucy talks about a young man she'd met: "Of course I had to tell him about dear baby and he said he could never have it with us and after a time he told me I must choose between baby and himself. I told him I could not marry

'I do wish I had you beside me dear, to have a long chat with you. You must not rush into intimacy just because you are lonely'

My Dear Friend

I am sending
you my photo with
which I do not like but
as I promised you one
I don't not like to disappoint
you. I don't not
hear from my lovely
A. & L. I wish

Separation anxiety: "My husband is fighting for his King and country and I miss him so much"



Questions for troubled times: far left, the cover of *Weekly Companion* in September 1916, and Fanny Deane's *Chat by the Fireside* from January 1915. "I should like you to tell me whether it is wrong to go to the Picture Palaces," asks one reader

anyone who would not be a father to my baby and so I bid him goodbye forever."

Mary must have sent Lucy a present for Wilfred because on 23 April she writes thanking her for it and then breaks the most ghastly news. "Dear friend I am grieved to tell you that my darling baby passed away 10 o'clock last night (Friday). I had been very busy making him a little dress and with your present too, I was going to have his photo taken on Monday. He was quite well Friday morning laughing and trying to talk in his little way but at about 3 in the afternoon he had a fit and never was out of it, he was dead by 10 o'clock at night. It was so terrible as the last time I saw him was the week after Easter he was such a lovely boy and oh so pretty ... it really makes me feel there is no God as everything is so hard. I felt that I had at last one thing that really did belong to me."

Wilfred Eric was buried the following Friday at Streatham Park Cemetery and Lucy, poleaxed by grief, writes on 7 May: "You are the only one who sympathises with me. Everyone else says it is a blessing that he was taken." By July, she has moved to 264 Bath Road, Kettering: "I left Gerrards Cross on May 14th," she writes. "I couldn't stay anywhere round there. Everything reminds me of my dear baby. I did not know I could ever love him so much." She has been to see "my darling's grave. Poor child, I shall never get over his loss".

There are no more letters from Lucy until 20 September when she writes in pencil in a shaky hand to say she has been ill in bed for two months with diphtheria. "I had not been myself for a long, long time now. I thought I was going to die. I would not have minded." The only good thing to

come out of her illness was that her "dear soldier brother" was sent for and came home from the front "so now I feel I have someone. It will soon be 12 months since my dear baby Wilfred was born and it is yet 5 months since I lost him. How lovely would he be now, had he lived."

In December, her grief still raw and intense, she tells Fanny she "cannot look at a baby, it is such a dreadful feeling. To think my poor, poor Wilfred lies deep under the turf. I would so love him back. Life is so lonely. You are the only person I can mention my dear baby to." She has met a man; he is about to enlist and they plan to get engaged before he leaves. "Now friend," she writes, "if you were in my place, would you tell him about my darling Eric? I don't know what to do and it makes me very unhappy."

'Life is so lonely'

By August 1916 Lucy has taken a job working in the fields near Rothwell. She thanks Mary for her "long and beautiful letter, though as yet I have not taken your advice. I have dropped several hints but he does not seem to take them ... My darling boy would be a year and 10 months on Thursday. What a gap he left behind him. I wonder if it will ever be filled. But I am afraid not it seems so to cling to me. I can almost feel his baby fingers now."

On 7 November Lucy makes "a very daring" offer which proves calamitous to the relationship between the two women: "Well dear friend, first of all I must make enquiries about your husband and hope he is still safe and also your children are well. Give them my best love and a kiss from me. I had been so looking forward to my brother coming from France but I am afraid he is killed or

'She wasn't particularly kind, and she wasn't interested in us. The only time she was ever nice was in front of other people'



Revealed: in this First World War picture of DC Thomson's "editorial girls", Mary Ann Brown, aka Fanny Deane, is on the far left of the front row

wounded so that he cannot write. I have not heard from him for six weeks. You will think I am making a very daring offer but I have been thinking so much lately about your little girl. Could you trust me to look after her at Xmas. You could put her on a train at St Pancras and I would meet her at Kettering. I would promise to take the greatest possible care of her and should love her dearly. Think over what I have asked won't you. I will close with deepest love, your sincere friend Lucy Allen."

This is the very last letter in the shoebox from Lucy Allen. The conversation stops abruptly - perhaps because Lucy had crossed an undeclared line, or maybe because real life for Mary had taken a new turn. In December 1916 Mary Ann Brown married David Malcolm Stewart, a hackle maker and factory owner from Dundee: she was 27, he was 40. Her column makes a final appearance on 9 December 1916.

Nine months after her marriage, Mary gave birth to her first child, Morna's father Rennie Stewart, followed by a second son, Bruce, in 1929. Morna agrees there's a possibility Mary was pregnant herself and had to leave work quickly. Certainly she was proud of her position and missed it greatly. She lived a long and fairly prosperous life but never worked again.

Morna, a retired teacher, has no warm memories of her grandmother. Does she think Mary felt real empathy with her readers? "It's hard to know," she says. "I don't know if I can answer that question. She wasn't particularly kind, and she wasn't interested in us. The only time she was ever nice was in front of other people."

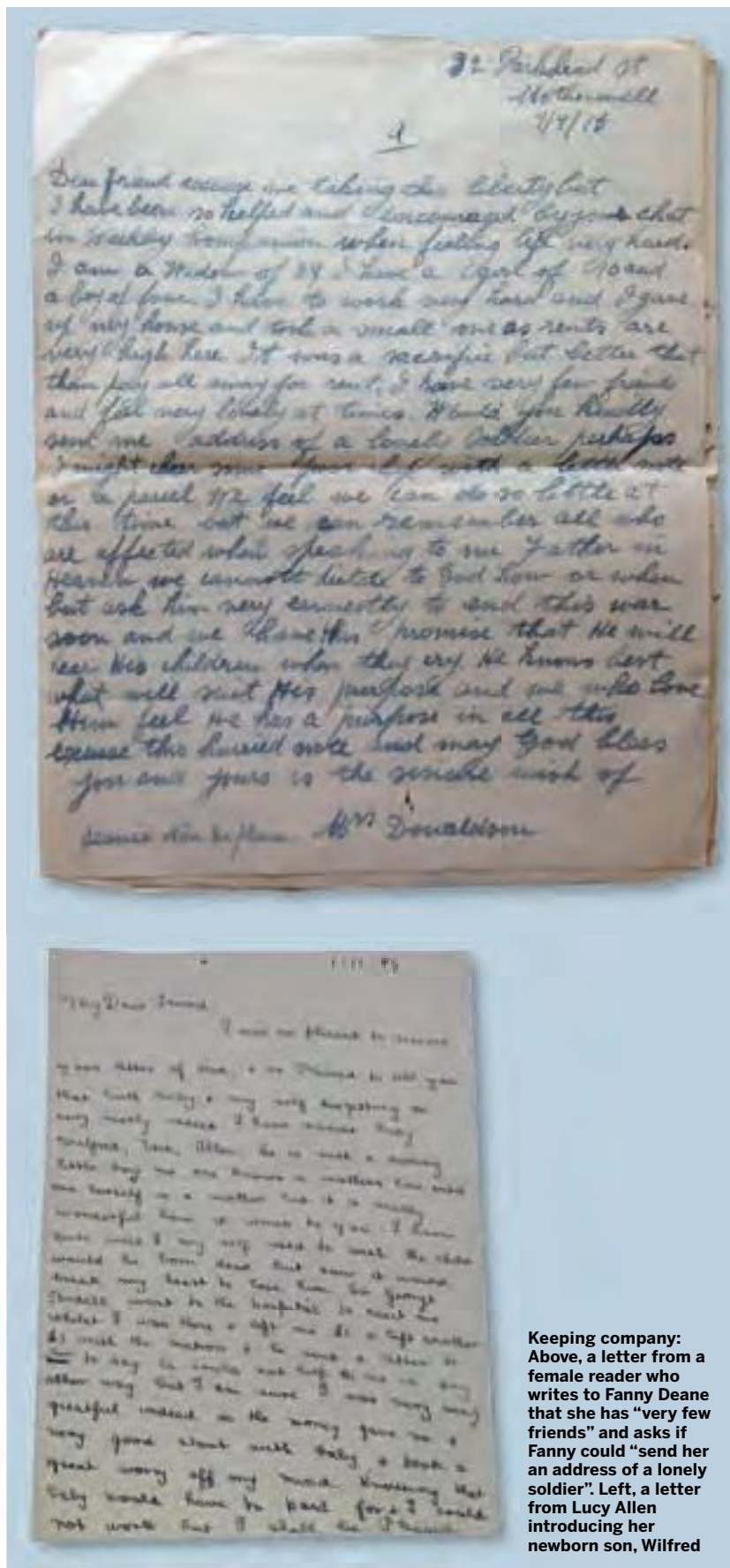
Morna is immovable on this point. She can't think of a single occasion that granny didn't spoil with her argumentativeness and lack of grace. But it's clear from the letters that Fanny Deane's "friendship" sustained hundreds of people during the early years of the war. There were two marriages - girls she'd connected with lonely soldiers - and many close bonds and attachments were forged through her column.

We may never know what happened to Lucy Allen, but I hope she found happiness. I visited Streatham Park Cemetery and found the grave of her beloved Wilfred Eric. He is buried in a common plot - or pauper's grave - along with 20 or 30 others, and there is no headstone. Lucy would not have been able to afford even to mark his passing. His life and death are marked merely with a number, 8974, and the ground has been turfed over and recently mown. There is nothing now, apart from the shoebox letters, to say he ever lived. I took rosemary for remembrance and sprigs of honeysuckle for devoted love and laid them on the spot where his young mother must have knelt alone so many times, whispering his name.



Caroline Scott

has written extensively on fostering and adoption and, last year, was approved as a foster carer herself.



Keeping company: Above, a letter from a female reader who writes to Fanny Deane that she has "very few friends" and asks if Fanny could "send her an address of a lonely soldier". Left, a letter from Lucy Allen introducing her newborn son, Wilfred

GHANA

WEST AFRICA'S SUCCESS STORY



© FH Communications Bureau

As one of Africa's most stable democracies, Ghana, with roughly 25 million people, is seen by many as a good place to invest given its abundance of natural resources—it is the world's second largest producer of cocoa beans and has been enjoying an oil boom since the discovery of the offshore Jubilee field in 2007— and its strong economic performance which has made the country West Africa's second-largest economy after Nigeria, with GDP growth reaching as high as 14% in recent years, but settling around 4.5% in 2014. Furthermore, the country, a member of ECOWAS, the Economic Community of West Africa, finalized a rebasing process for its GDP calculations in 2010 which led to estimates of its economic size nearly two thirds larger than what was previously thought, propelling the West African nation into lower-middle-income status, leaving behind its former status as a developing country.

Ghana shares a long and successful relationship with the U.S., being, according to Mr. Seth Terkper, Ghana's Finance Minister, one of the main beneficiaries of American investment since independence in 1957 and one of the countries that profits most from U.S. Presidential initiatives. According to him, this relationship "is only getting stronger" and the future also looks bright for bilateral relations. "We signed the Millennium Challenge Completion Compact Two to support our power sector. We are part of USAID's 'Feed the Future' program, and one of five countries taking part of the 'Partnership for Growth' program, which was launched by President Obama."

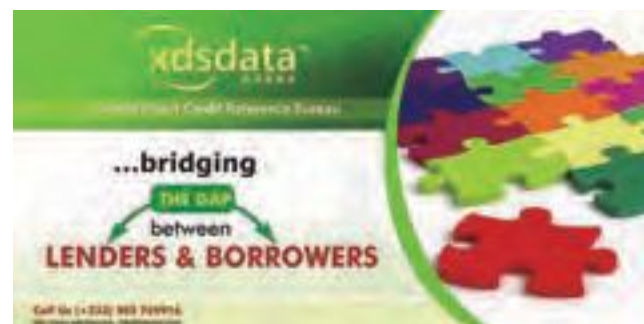
Ghana's current President is John Dramani Mahama. A member of the National Democratic Congress, the political party founded by Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings, who was Ghana's Head of State from 1981 to 1993 and the country's President from 1993 to 2001, when he stepped down after two terms, the most permitted by Ghana's Constitution.

When Mr. Mahama took office, he also made political history by being the country's first head of state to have been born after Ghana's declaration of independence in March 1957. A published author and historian, Mr. Mahama has invested a lot in the country's present needs and future developments, and moving the country forward towards attaining upper-middle-income-status is certainly his priority.

GHANA'S ENERGY IS POWERING ITS FUTURE

Since discovering oil offshore at the Jubilee field, Ghana's hydrocarbon sector has significantly grown in terms of infrastructure and production. Considering the discovery was made in 2007, the country has amazed investors by quickly setting-up the kind of legal and enabling environment the new circumstances require, including the creation of the regulatory framework, agencies and funding needed.

By 2011, oil production had reached 78,000 barrels per day, a tenfold increase on 2009's 7,000 barrels per day. By 2012 hydrocarbon exports were worth around \$3 billion, with oil overtaking cocoa as the country's second largest export earner after gold.



NATIONAL PETROLEUM AUTHORITY

And Ghana certainly looks set to bank on this, especially given its geographical location, which sets it up as the ideal spot to become West Africa's energy hub. A lot of the infrastructure needed to achieve this is already in place, but the sector needs to develop further, something the country's National Petroleum Authority (NPA) –the downstream industry's regulatory body– hopes will happen in the near future when more foreign companies invest in deep water and ultra deep water exploration.

The emergence of indigenous gas production in Ghana, as well as its reputation as a stable country to do business in, has increased its appeal among international investors. Large oil companies, according to Mr. Moses Asaga, CEO of the NPA, are already “coming in to partner with smaller companies in Ghana,” the country is set to exploit its natural resources, and



Moses Asaga
CEO National
Petroleum Authority:
“Ghana's energy mix
is evolving towards
indigenous gas.”

do so in favor of its population. “General Electric is to build a 1,000 megawatt power plant,” Mr. Asaga stated, and once that happens, “Ghana will be a hub, able to distribute electricity to our neighboring West African countries.” With a gas pipeline running from Nigeria to Ghana which, “can go into Ivory Coast,” and transmission lines reaching up to the border with Burkina-Faso, which can “tie up to Togo” running up to the country's eastern corner, the country has the infrastructure. “We really need to produce power, which can be easily distributed,” Mr. Asaga stated.

MINING: A SAFE INVESTMENT FOR FOREIGN COMPANIES

Once known as the Gold Coast, it is not surprising that Ghana ranks as the

second largest gold producer in Africa, after South Africa, and as the ninth in the world. But the country's mining sector does not rely on the precious metal alone for its existence. Ghana also has considerable mineral resources such as diamonds, manganese and bauxite.

According to the Ghana Chamber of Mines, mining and quarrying contributed 9.8% to the country's GDP in 2013, up from 9.5% the year before. Hence, in 2013, total revenue from minerals reached \$4.79 billion, where gold made up 97.5% of the total mineral revenue.

The country's largest gold production is divided between industrial miners and small-scale miners, which account for more than a third of overall production, with Gold Fields Ghana Group – a South African enterprise operating in the country since 1993– being the biggest producer in the market with its Tarkwa and Damang mines.



Alfred Baku
EVP & Head of
West Africa
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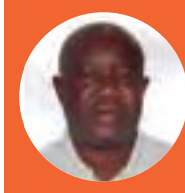
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LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The legislation underpinning Ghana's mining industry is 2006's Minerals and Mining Act. However, on a yearly basis, most of the regulation and fiscal policy that affects the sector comes from the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Land and Natural Resources and the Presidency. The Government actively seeks international and private investors to fully develop the country's mineral resources. And although Ghana faces increasing competition in the mining sector from neighboring countries, its long history of mining, abundant resources, and legal and political stability remain significant competitive advantages.



Bagnaba Van Gogh
CEO Van Gold
Mining Services:
"Ready to take on
big projects."

VAN GOLD MINING SERVICES Ltd.

Van Gold Mining Services Ltd. is one of Ghana's youngest and most dynamic mining companies and its CEO, Mr. Bagnaba Van Gogh, is certainly a force to be reckoned with in the sector. Educated in Ghana before moving on to Cuba, he graduated with a Canal De-

sign Engineering degree and is currently doing an MBA in Oil & Gas.

According to its CEO, Van Gold "has the capacity to be counted among a team of players who are willing to push to the limit. Our products and services will be winners, and for that we are ready to partner with the best. We think that the sky is the limit, but if we go beyond, that will be fine for us!"

Mr. Van Gogh's company is "ready to take on big projects" and is keen to

encourage cooperation and partnerships. "We dwell very much on integrity and honesty."

At present, Van Gold owns one of the richest mines in Ghana:

Nangodi, located 780 kilometers north of Accra. According to its CEO, the "quality of its ore has been proven and is enormous." This is something that could mean an extraordinary change in the economic fortunes for the locals. The entire area could be "transformed into an industrial hub." To do this, the company requires new technology, as well as financing, and he would like to



remind potential investors that Nangodi is a "win-win situation for the investor and Van Gold as a company."

The company has put an elaborate plan in place "to provide social amenities and complement the efforts of the central government." To carry this plan out Van Gold is looking at an investment of around \$7 million in the area.

Mr. Van Gogh believes in Ghana's industry and the work of the government within the mining industry, calling it very liberal, emphasizing that what makes Ghana's mines unique is that when you invest there "your investment is safe, it's protected. The mining climate is very, very conducive." When it



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comes to foreign investment, he believes Ghana stands out in the crowd thanks to its business environment and its well-trained workforce. “We should be looking at ways and means of encouraging young entrepreneurs to rise up to become the Rockefellers of Africa,” he said.

DEVELOPMENT YOU CAN BANK ON

With 27 licensed banks operating in the country, Ghana’s banking system is buoyant and it stands as one of Africa’s most advanced, and the country’s most regulated, industry. It is well capitalized, the non-performing loan (NPL) ratio has been declining for a number of years, and regulation pushes continually to ensure it remains sound and inclusive overall. The country’s urban centers are well served by banks, and the rural areas are stocked with a wide range of specialist institutions. Furthermore, Ghana’s payment system is robust, with facilities for real-time settlements, interoperability, fast-check clearing, instant transfers and high-tech, chip-based, products. As a result of all the legal and structural measures undertaken by Ghana, the country’s banking sector has grown

quickly. For example, at the end of 2013, paid-up capital for deposit money banks was \$826.4 million, while paid-up capital for all banks reached \$1.1 billion, according to the Bank of Ghana’s (BoG) annual report.

Moreover, the sector is also meeting its required ratios: at the end of 2013, capital adequacy was 18.5%, according to the BoG, a figure above the 10% minimum.

Nevertheless, much of the country remains unbanked despite the existence of specialist rural banks, and non-bank financial institutions (NBFIs). This issue is being addressed by several of the banks operating in Ghana, including the National Investment Bank (NIB).

NATIONAL INVESTMENT BANK

The NIB was established in 1963 to spearhead Ghana’s industrial development. Its Managing Director since January 2014, Mr. Ernest Mawuli Agbesi, who has been in banking for over 30 years, is committed to the country’s industrial and economic

development, seeing the NIB as instrumental in making this happen.

In order to achieve this, and taking into account the social and banking nature of the country, the bank has established

a “department for the Small and Medium sized enterprises.”

Mr. Agbesi says that, according to several studies, around 70% of the country’s active population work in the ‘informal sector’

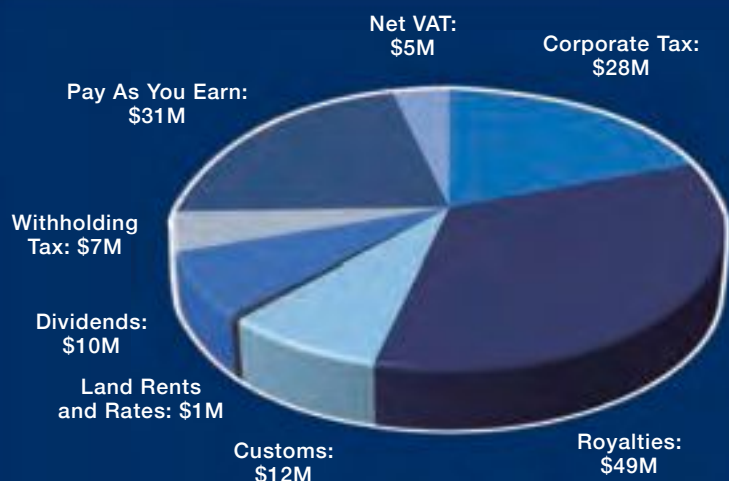
and mentions that, while several banks are targeting corporate clients and wealthy individuals, “many people still keep their money at home,” and this situation is an opportunity for all banks. But he does not forget about the need for foreign investment, reminding prospective investors that the country is one of Africa’s most stable democracies and that “when you bring in your money there won’t be any instability. Like the British, we have passed good laws to protect investors. And I believe that most investors coming into Ghana are safe.” And insofar as American invest-



Ernest Mawuli Agbesi
MD National
Investment Bank:

“Open to work
with the big banks
out there.”

Our 2014 Contribution to Ghana’s Economy



GOLD FIELDS

Gold Fields Ghana (GFG) is a leading mining company in Ghana, a significant contributor to the nation’s tax revenue, and an industry leader in social economic development. GFG is part of Gold Fields Limited (GFL), which has a primary listing on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE), and secondary listings on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE), NASDAQ Dubai, Euronext in Brussels (NYSE) and the Swiss Exchange (SWX).

GFG has two operating mines in Ghana, the Tarkwa and Damang Gold Mines, each of which is 90% owned by GFL and 10% by the government of Ghana. Within the next three years, GFG aims to have sustainable operations that can produce at least 1 Million ounces of gold per annum, at an all-in cost of US\$ 1,000 per ounce, and with zero lost time injuries.

Apart from contributing US\$142 Million in revenue to Ghana’s economic development in 2014, GFG also employed almost 6,500 people, directly and through third party contractors.

Being the first mining company in Ghana to establish a Foundation (the Gold Fields Ghana Foundation), GFG has so far invested over US\$26 Million in community development projects, particularly in Education, Health, Water and Sanitation, Agriculture and Agribusiness, and Infrastructure. Additionally, Gold Fields Ghana has spent approximately US\$15 Million towards the promotion and development of sports in Ghana.

For its adherence to good corporate governance and contribution to national development, GFG has won several national and international awards. In 2014 GFG took a Platinum Award for Investment Promotion as well as the Best CSR Policy Africa.

ment is concerned, he believes it should strongly invest “in housing.”

The NIB has certainly changed a lot since its inception. “Initially we were just a development Bank trying to support the industries, but when the banking Act was passed in 2004, all banks were given the investor banking license and now all banks in Ghana are investment banks, although not specialized.”

NIB has invested in construction, “but now we are more into agriculture. We are financing rubber and palm plantations in western, eastern and central regions,” he says. “As well as renewables and mining projects.” Furthermore, “we are one of the main financiers for Cocoa,” he states.

Finally, he says that NIB is always looking for collaborations “especially with the big banks out there” and “particularly in the Energy and Oil sectors” were he would like to see “more collaboration regarding for example credit lines, as these projects have very high tickets.”

BARCLAYS BANK GHANA: Patience Akyianu, breaking the glass ceiling in Ghana.

One of the most successful foreign banks operating in the country is Barclays Ghana, established there almost a century ago. Mrs. Patience Akyianu has been its Managing Director since 2013, after five years as its Finance Director. Previously, she worked as Financial Controller at Standard Chartered Bank in Ghana and as Chief Finance Officer of Standard Chartered Bank, in Johannesburg.

Mrs. Akyianu is Ghana’s first female Bank Managing Director, and she aims to use this appointment to further the cause of women in her country. “The

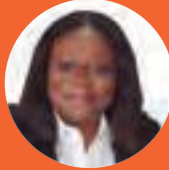
most critical role for women in leadership is mainly about ‘bursting the bubble’ which covers many people’s minds about women’s chances of rising to leadership positions,” some-

thing she says is more about “being a trailblazer, to inspire younger women and mentor or coach them to believe that there is not much difference in be-

ing a man or a woman and becoming a leader.” For her, what matters most “is developing oneself to deliver at a very high level and recognizing the sacrifices that are needed to be made to rise to the top.”


MRS. AKYIANU IS GHANA’S FIRST FEMALE BANK MANAGING DIRECTOR

She also highlights the importance of using the privilege of being a leader “to positively touch as many lives as we can as this will inspire others to aim for the top.” Barclays Ghana, she stated, plays a broad role in the communities where it operates through its community investment programs and the direct volunteer efforts of its employees, and this is done through community investment programs targeted at disadvantaged youth. For example, Barclay’s Village Savings & Loan Association is a financial inclusion model designed to help community members create wealth among themselves and is expected to



Patience Akyianu
MD Barclays Bank:

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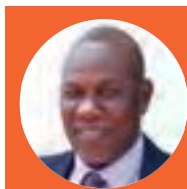
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directly impact 54,000 young people. The program's first phase, which ended in 2012, helped "over 79,000 marginalized rural folks across the country." In 2014 it helped 3,000 young people nationwide "through our Unlocking Youth Potential program, which is designed to train and whip up entrepreneurial spirit in the young," she said.

When asked about what can be done to fully develop Ghana's financial services industry, she stated that it needs to "keep healthy competition on all fronts" and that Barclays "innovates to provide solutions to our specific customer and market needs." She added, "the more we seek the specific but dynamic needs of our customers, the financial services industry will drive other factors like regulation and other industries to develop alongside it."



George Ahiafor,
Founder & CEO
XDS Data Ghana:

"Ghana's first credit
referencing company."

XDS DATA GHANA: How a personal vision turned into an industry standard.

Mr. George Ahiafor, is the founder and CEO of the credit referencing firm, XDS Data Ghana. After a very successful career in banking, which took him from his native Ghana to the U.S., Switzerland and, almost, Singapore –when offered the job he said "No. I needed to be in Ghana"–, he decided to settle

in his native country and work on his dream of setting up Ghana's first credit referencing company. Today, his company has helped the banking industry to comply with Ghana's credit referencing laws, which he was instrumental in creating.

Having worked previously in the country for Standard Chartered Bank, Mr. Ahiafor realized that "access to credit was becoming a problem" in the country. "I started thinking about why there was no credit referencing," he said. People who deposited their savings in the banks did not have access to credit "even though they had an

account in the bank. When they came, the bank said: 'We don't know you, we don't know how you'll behave if we give the money to you.' So if people really wanted a loan, they had to get "a guarantor, or collateral." He soon realized how many people had collateral to put up. "Land or property, a car, those kind of things. So I started wondering about creating a company that would do just that, and help Ghana, and the banking



sector, along the way." And he called his credit-scoring idea a "no-brainer." Mr. Ahiafor recalled when, from an American point of view, "they were reluctant to dealing with countries like Ghana, due to lack of information" The reason being that investors didn't have "any background information on whatever it was that they wanted to invest in." Today, his business can help with that. "We're stabilizing the financial sector. The markup on doing business in Ghana is huge!" he said. ■

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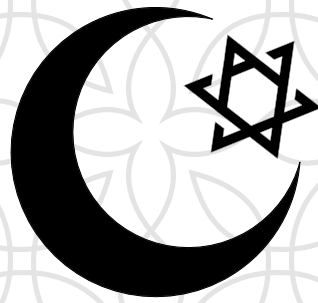
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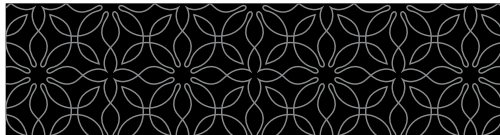
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TODAY'S LESSON: HOW JEWS AND ARABS CAN LEARN TO LIVE TOGETHER IN ISRAEL

In Jaffa's Tabeetha School children of all faiths are taught side by side – 'I'm not sitting next to my enemy. I'm sitting next to my best friend,' says one girl. Newsweek's reporter, whose Palestinian father attended the school and whose mother is Jewish, finds what chance it has against the world outside

BY CLAIRE HAJAJ IN JAFFA



he Ethiopian Jewish customs officer at the West Bank border crossing is not convinced by my story. “And what is the purpose of your visit to Israel?” He flicks through my

British passport, pausing over my Arab surname. I explain again: I’m making a personal pilgrimage to Jaffa’s famous Tabeetha School, where my father once studied. This seems unsatisfactory. He gives my passport to Shin Bet security. So begins a 10-hour wait, watching long queues of Palestinians negotiate a weary homecoming.

As night falls I try a desperate tactic and, a few minutes later, security officials are gathered round my iPhone, reading a *Newsweek* article about my parents - a Jew and a Palestinian, who in their different ways see this land as home. My Ethiopian nemesis looks at me in disbelief - or, perhaps, disapproval. “Talk about stuck in the middle,” he says. When I finally crawl into darkening Tel Aviv, the city’s Ethiopian Jews are rioting. Anger at discrimination by Israel’s Ashkenazy elite has erupted into violence, met by mounted police and tear gas. Radio pundits predict widening rifts across “Bibi’s Israel”, as I cross the virtual divide separating gleaming skyscrapers from rambling, Arab Jaffa.

My father’s Jaffa

My father was shaped by Jaffa and I know it as a city of myths and memory, a multicultural jewel of the Arab Levant. He was the eldest son of a wealthy Muslim orange farmer. His boyhood was spent playing among Jaffa’s dazzling assortment of identities - in souks run by Mizrahi Jews, in orange groves owned by Christian and Muslim Arabs and in houses built by Armenians, Europeans and Americans, whose families did business together.

Then, over a few short days in April 1948, many of them vanished. Jaffa’s Arab population collapsed from around 100,000 to fewer than 4,000 as Jaffa fell to advancing Jewish forces. None ever returned. My father could have been one of them. But then he found something that changed him, and our family, for ever.

I first heard from Tabeetha School last year after publication of my novel *Ishmael’s Oranges*, based on my parents’ unlikely marriage. It unleashed a torrent of emails from ex-Tabeethans, who had just celebrated the school’s 150th anniversary. They were thrilled to rediscover an old friend and none of them seemed at all surprised that Mahmoud Hajaj would marry a Jewess. Why should they be? They were Jews and Muslims and Christians who had all known and loved each other from childhood.

These relationships were built in Tabeetha’s classrooms amid bitter divisions. In the chaos that followed 1948, tens of thousands of children were swept into Jaffa - displaced by the fighting, or arriving on wings of Israel’s Aliyah, the immigration of diaspora Jews. So Tabeetha threw open its doors to boys and girls, to Arabs and Jews, promising a non-political education for all it sheltered.

It’s a promise Tabeetha keeps to this day. Half

a century after my father graduated, I stand outside the school’s iron gate - set in a high wall on a quiet street beyond Jaffa’s tourist centre, painted the colours of sea and stone. The gate has stood since 1863, when Scottish governess Jane Walker Arnott chose this spot to bequeath a respectable Christian education to Jaffa’s poor girls. The Church of Scotland still plays a role in the school’s governance today. Here, the Bible says, St Peter slept after raising a local woman from the dead - Tabitha, famed for her good deeds. It’s a fitting namesake for a school that has survived so many upheavals.

Waiting to greet me in a classroom is my father’s old schoolmate and fellow survivor of the Palestinian “catastrophe” of 1948 - Mohammed Abou Kaoud. At eight, he hid with his mother in Jaffa’s French Hospital while Irgun mortars rained around them and his handyman father struggled to keep the lights on and the water running. “I remember crouching under the table and hearing the bombs, as if the table would save me. Everyone was fleeing and we wanted to go as well. But the head nurse told my father, we have operations, we need you. So we stayed.”

When the first post-war Jewish influx arrived, Abou Kaoud played with the children in Jaffa’s devastated neighbourhoods, picking up Bulgarian, Yiddish and Hebrew. And at 10, he enrolled in Tabeetha - the first Muslim to do in those early, difficult years. Fifties Jaffa was a broken place - scarred by internment, hunger, military supervision and the loss of Arab homes and livelihoods. But to Abou Kaoud, Tabeetha was a haven, insulating the pupils from the worst of bitterness. “To us, the Jews were not complete strangers. We played together, learned together. Some told us stories that were just terrible. They showed us the numbers on their arms, and we sympathised with them.”

Abou Kaoud has never left Tabeetha. Sixty-six years later, he remains a revered mathematics teacher who seems almost blind to political differences. “As a teacher, the words Jew or Arab mean nothing to me. A child is a child.” He is delighted to see me - to trace my resemblance to his old friend. We look at pictures of their schooldays - bizarre and wonderful - of Jewish girls with beehive hairstyles and Peggy-Sue dresses locking arms with laughing Arab boys in white shirts. One of those girls - now a grandmother - was among the first to contact me from her home in Tel Aviv. “I never had such friends in my life,” she wrote. My father kneels quietly in the foreground of one snap; in another he bends his head over homework next to a fair Jewish-Canadian boy with a bomber jacket and a cigarette. The subtitle says: “Pretending to study.”

Long shadows

The children streaming past Abou Kaoud’s classroom door look heart-wrenchingly similar to those 1950s photos, snapshots of diversity reincarnated in modern colour. But between then and now lie long shadows: 1967, 1973, the Lebanon wars, two intifadas and three brutal Gaza conflicts. A Right-wing coalition has been

‘As a teacher, the words Jew or Arab mean nothing to me. A child is a child’

re-elected in Israel, its 1.6 million Arab citizens painted as a threat. After more than 60 years in Jewish democracy, Arab communities are Israel's poorest and least employed: a fifth of the population, they generate just 8% of Israel's GDP. Can institutions like Tabeetha still bridge a gulf that seems deeper and blacker than ever?

Tabeeetha's headmaster Anthony Short believes so. "You have to start teaching co-existence really young, and you have to involve parents," he says. Short, a committed Christian, moved his family from South Africa to Israel in 1999; his wife, Darya, can trace her family roots to the Jews of Hebron. "By six or seven we're already hearing, 'Mummy says you can't come and play because you're Jewish or Arab'. It's usually from parents who aren't ex-Tabeeethans."

In my father's day, there were equal numbers of Jews and Arabs learning at Tabeetha. But I learn that the Jewish student body is dwindling. Jews now represent under a tenth of all students. Where are all the Jewish children going? Short says most are now in Israel's well-funded Hebrew public schools, offering a state-approved curriculum and guaranteed Hebrew fluency. Several other prestigious international schools have also opened - drawing away the wealthiest students. With so much competition around, and relationships between the communities so fraught, why would anyone sign up for Tabeetha's brand of mixed education?

"It's a tricky balancing act," Short admits. When he took up the headmaster's mantle at Tabeetha seven years ago, the school had faced down financial crisis more than once. To survive Israel's realities, he believes Tabeetha has to do more to promote itself as a centre of academic excellence. His introduction of baseline testing for new entrants was, he says, a controversial step for a school originally founded to provide a local, Christian service. "Now we only look at the results of the test - not whether they're children of alumni, not whether they're Christian, Muslim or Jewish. And that can be difficult for people who believe the school should protect access for certain groups."

Walking through Tabeetha, it's hard to visualise it as an institution under pressure. At break time, children jostle over a football against the backdrop of a painted peace wall - their faces shaded dark and pale, a blur of Semitic and European features. Others tend a sustainable greenhouse grown from local seeds. But memories also haunt the campus, some from past dramas and some from more recent troubles.

Weidad Andraus, an elegant septuagenarian from one of Jaffa's leading Arab families, remembers when Jewish Orthodox groups attacked the school in the 1960s. "They thought we were converting our Jewish pupils to Christianity. It was very frightening."

During the first Gulf war the school was evacuated to Cyprus, nearly bankrupting the institution. And when rockets fell during the recent Gaza incursions, pupils did emergency drills in a school hall equipped with food,



medicines, masks and water supplies. Did the fighting put a strain on student relationships? "We teach the children not to blame one side or faith," Short says. "But in reality, they do feel pulled both ways. Some of the Arab kids have family in Gaza - and yet they are here, being shot at. It's confusing. They say - 'Why are they shooting at us? We're Arab too'."

Racial expulsion

Jaffa itself feels pulled both ways - between a cherished past and an accelerating present. In this once wealthy city, 17,000 Arab residents now face an onslaught of modernisation. Each generation is being pushed further away from the sea and towards the slums as development fever seizes coastal areas. The value of land in my old family neighbourhood of Ajami - home to Arabs and also Mizrahi and Sephardic Jews like my Ethiopian border guard - has more than doubled more in the past few years.

Pressure on local owners to sell up is intense - and up to 500 long-standing property disputes have defaulted into eviction notices, almost all

"You have to start teaching co-existence really young": pupils by Tabeetha's Peace Wall. Above, an Israeli air strike hits Gaza during last year's incursions, when rockets were also fired towards Jaffa and Tel Aviv



Pillars of wisdom: above, the oldest part of the Tabeetha school building and, right on facing page, longstanding teacher Mohammed Abou Kaoud shows a picture of himself with Claire Hajaj's father, Mahmoud, in their schooldays

against Arab families. Weidad Andraus and her sisters Laila and Suad - who holds an MBE for services to the British Foreign Office - drive me past the home of an old friend whose run-down villa was recently put on the market. "They asked 12 million shekels (€2.8m)," she says.

Gentrification - whether driven by normal economic pressures or (as many claim) a de facto racial expulsion policy - is creating another urgent conundrum for Jaffa's Arabs: how and where to educate their children. This decision affects economic prospects, political identity and cultural survival. All Israel's public schools teach a Zionist curriculum and narrative. The Arabic-language schools are notoriously underfunded and unhappy; dropout rates in Jaffa's Arab secondary schools have been unofficially assessed at a sky-high 49% (although one official national study claims lower figures - around 11%).

So a growing number of Arab children now try their luck in the Hebrew system; Hebrew fluency is a prerequisite for university admission. But here, too, dropout rates are twice as high as for Jewish children - suggesting a deep struggle on both sides to adapt. Tabeetha is a way out of this Hobson's Choice - for those who can still afford it. The student base is two-thirds local Arabs, joining expatriates and Jewish immigrants whose parents value an English education away from political agendas.

In Tabeetha's ninth-grade comparative religion class, Arab children sit next to children of all faiths from Romania, Mexico, America and Nigeria. Ronan, 15, has an Israeli-Jewish mother

and a Chinese father. "In other schools, they do demonise," he says. "But in Tabeetha you are surrounded by opposites."

Behind him, Sally and Dona sit whispering to each other. Dona was born here to Jewish parents, returning after a spell abroad. She tried a Hebrew school but found it oppressive. "Here you don't have to be Israel supporter or an Arab supporter. Here I have space." Her best friend Sally, an Arab girl from a nearby village, agrees. "You get to know that what they say about Jewish people is not true. I'm not sitting next to my enemy. I'm sitting next to my best friend."

These are beautiful sentiments. But I wonder what fruit they will bear. Outside Tabeetha's protective walls, Israel's competing narratives - Zionist progress and Palestinian loss - do not make such happy neighbours. The erosion of Jaffa's Arab identity is painfully visible. Jaffa's famous Clock Tower Square has become a lonely island, surrounded by tourist shops with Hebrew names. Its souks and city walls have been reincarnated in neater versions with carefully mounted wall plaques and pedestrian pathways filled with Russian tour groups. Renovated apartment blocks sell for millions of shekels to Israel's up-and-comers, predominantly Jews. A renowned Arab city once dominated by men like my grandfather - a freemason and a Rotarian - now seems to exist only as a second language on street signs.

Armed robbery

Jaffa's transformation has sparked a political

awakening for a new generation. Sami Abu Shhadeh is one of those leading the fightback, as director of the Popular Committee for the Defence of Housing and Land Rights in Jaffa. "What Jaffa has gone through, is going through," he says, "is armed robbery."

Abu Shhadeh's nephew attended Tabeetha, and he takes issue with its apolitical stance. "This school communicates mainstream Jewish national identity to its students," he says. "It does not give space to protest. If you are a Palestinian and you are wearing a hatta, they don't accept it. They are not able to see why this is important to restoring justice in this country."

Jaffa's high dropout rate, Abu Shhadeh says, springs from a deep identity crisis that he believes conscientiously objecting schools like Tabeetha cannot address. "Our Palestinian children have nowhere to aspire to," he says. "We are a nation of more than 1.5 million developing without a majority Arab city. A Palestinian living in Jordan can be prime minister, can control the intellectual dialogue. But Israel does not allow us to control anything."

In 2013, Abu Shhadeh and a group of Arab and Jewish parents lobbied Tel Aviv Municipality to introduce a different kind of co-learning model already running in four other mixed communities. Called Yad B'Yad (Hand in Hand), it envisages fully bilingual classrooms with two teachers - one Jew, one Arab - offering both national narratives.

They found an unlikely ally in Ami Shavit, head of the Municipal Authority for Developing Jaffa. Shavit convinced the Tel Aviv Municipal Education Department to co-fund the project, which so far has 100 children in three kindergarten classes hosted by another local school. They hope to open a first grade in the coming school year.

"My personal view is that giving space to both Zionist and Palestinian narratives in the classroom is essential to help us understand each other," Shavit says. "In any other country this would be obvious - but the obvious in Israel is surprising."

Shavit and Abu Shhadeh claim that many parents want a nationwide, integrated education option. They also believe that demand is rising, paradoxically, as politics becomes more polarised. But it's never easy to marry practicalities and ideologies. Several "co-learning" experiments have foundered - and Jaffa's is already running into problems. "For example, the public school hosting us celebrates only Jewish cultural holidays," Shavit says. "But Yad B'Yad schools should have combined Jewish, Christian and Muslim holidays." To date, they still can't agree how to make it work for everyone.

Although they differ on approach, Yad B'Yad and Tabeetha both share the conviction that education is the key to equality - and that equality must be the foundation for a future both Arabs and Jews can live with. For one side, equality cannot come without redress - and Arabs who learn otherwise in their schoolrooms have "accepted their inferiority". But sitting in

Mohammed Abou Kaoud's apartment, over tea with his wife, it occurs to me that to him, equality might wear a different face.

Pictures of Abou Kaoud's beloved pupils line the walls, alongside images of his sons - who flourished and built worthwhile lives. One is a judge in Jerusalem, one a wealthy pharmacist. All went to Tabeetha and learned to think beyond identity politics. His eldest, Hassan, still teaches mathematics and physics at the school. Abou Kaoud plans to retire this year, to rest and enjoy time with his grandchildren.

"I'm proud to be an Arab and proud to be a Muslim," Abou Kaoud says. "But frankly we have to accept that we are Israeli. This gives us rights, and also commitments. I will obey Israel's laws, even if I don't agree with all of them. But I also want to be able to go to Netanyahu and the Knesset and say, 'Look, give me my right as a citizen'."

It's hard not to be touched by his faith - by the unlikely devotion of this class of Arabs and Jews, outlasting decades, wars and even a drift, for some, towards extreme positions. On the last page of Abou Kaoud's school album I see them gathered again, for Tabeetha's 150th anniversary celebrations: in their seventies, smiling arm-in-arm, defying half a century of rage. The images are bittersweet. For every seed of hope planted, a few have inevitably withered. My father and mother lost each other to a widening political divide. But two other Tabeethans - a Palestinian and Jew - received the school's "longest marriage" award at the alumni dinner. Maybe in another 50 years, Sally and Dona's friendship will have demonstrated a similar staying power. But to make a real difference in this fractured nation, millions will have to follow - finding ways to fit individual jigsaw-pieces of history into a common vision of the future.

My visit is supposed to end with a trip to our old family orange groves - where my grandfather once hosted Abou Kaoud, the Andraus sisters and my father for an after-school picnic. But we talk so long that we run out of time. Abou Kaoud consoles me by telling me that the groves have all but vanished, eaten up by a new intersection two years ago. He shakes his head, sad - as I am - at these moments of opportunity that pass so quickly and are so hard to recapture. Like the opportunity for peace with his generation, which he believes was needlessly thrown away.

"I remember the days of Peres, of Rabin," he says. "I felt that something special was happening."

He looks over his balcony at the remains of Jaffa's orange groves, a few scattered trees against yellowing walls. "I was so proud," he says, lost in memory. "I would have fought for Israel then." ■



'To us, the Jews were not complete strangers. We played together, learned together. Some told us stories that were just terrible. They showed us the numbers on their arms, and we sympathised with them'



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NEWSWALK

GEORGE STEINER

**'I HAVE BEEN
TOO SCATTERED
AND DISPERSED
AND LOVED TOO
MANY THINGS
PASSIONATELY'**

Known as one of the 'great cultural middle-men of the 20th century' the critic and author tells Nicholas Shakespeare about a life spent as a harbinger and disseminator of other works of genius; 'a chirp bird on the back of a rhinoceros'

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTONIO OLMOS FOR NEWSWEEK



“NO.

NEWSWALKS

In his *Walking Essays* of 1912, a brilliant young English writer, AH Sidgwick, proposed that walking “lays a foundation of mutual respect more quickly and more surely” than any other activity. The environment of a walk was exactly right: “Familiar enough to create a sense of ease, and yet strange enough to throw the walkers back on themselves with the instinct of human solidarity.”

When Paddy Leigh Fermor and Bruce Chatwin strode, chatting, through the Peloponnesian landscape, they were enacting Diogenes’ solvitur ambulando – it is solved by walking.

With this in mind *Newsweek* has invited some of the world’s most interesting thinkers to go on a walk of their choice, while reflecting on their own lives, inspirations and ambitions.

No walk.”

He has been interviewed by many distinguished people. This is frivolous. Plus, at 86 his health is too frail.

He is about to put down the receiver, I sense. “Wait, what about a walk around your house and garden?”

I was thinking of Albert Speer in Spandau. How Hitler’s deputy walked in his imagination to Heidelberg, by circulating the prison garden. Yet Spandau is not Cambridge. In virtually every respect, Speer is the opposite of George Steiner.

To my mind, Steiner is an intellectual wanderer who outpaces most of his generation. Aged 17, I heard him give a fearless talk about the supremacy of literature that confirmed me in my decision to read English at university. There, I studied his *Death of Tragedy* and *After Babel*, and wished I was being taught by Steiner and not by the gauleiters of Structuralism who continued, scandalously to our minds, to deny him tenure (“I have conducted my emotional, intellectual and professional affairs in distrust of theory,” he wrote in a reticent memoir. “‘Theory’ is nothing but intuition grown impatient.”). In Tel Aviv a fortnight later, the Israeli novelist Amos Oz would tell me: “Jews are middle-men. George is one of the great cultural middle-men and readers of the 20th century. He makes books pass from culture to culture.”

Which is to say, if there’s an intellectual I wouldn’t mind going on a stroll with, even a circumscribed stroll, it is Francis George Steiner.

At the other end of the telephone, there’s a hesitation. “All right.”

A cosmic tactlessness

The man in the white jersey who opens the door is smiling. Tufts of hair below the chin lend him a mandarin appearance. We shake hands awkwardly – he was born like the Kaiser and Lord Halifax with a withered arm he is unable to rotate.

“Everything depends on it,” he says. “The first years, I was in constant therapeutic treatment, clinics in Paris and Switzerland. My mother fought it like a lioness. I had to tie my shoe-laces – I could have had a zipper. No. I had to write right-handed – I could have written with my left. No. My mother simply would not allow me to evade the issue. The

great moment came, aged four, when she said, ‘You don’t realise how fortunate you are – no military service’. At that time, military service was three years, it knocked your life to bits. I felt so pleased, and never again experienced it as a handicap or punishment. It made me both different and privileged.” As well, it may have contributed to what Steiner considers his chief talent: “In my whole life, my main gift has been a cosmic tactlessness.”

We’re sitting in his drawing-room, side by side, facing the bookshelves. I take in orange curtains, a copper chimney-piece, a chess set, stacks of records on a red carpet, and a padded window-seat overflowing with art books and diplomas. Squarely facing the garden, and us, is a thrish, high-backed chair, upholstered in yellow satin.

I remind Steiner of something overlooked in today’s newspapers. On this rainy morning 75 years ago, Winston Churchill, and not the favourite contender Lord Halifax, replaced Neville Chamberlain as prime minister.

Eyes sparkling, Steiner leans forward. “Churchill signed my fellowship, you know.”

In 1961, Steiner became a founding Fellow of Churchill College, which originally was envisaged as an institution on its own, like MIT. “Churchill’s opinion of the intellectual mandarin was not high, but he gradually resigned himself to the Cambridge solution.” Steiner never met Churchill, but in a totally silent, pre-dawn London he watched his funeral “from a window allowed me by the *Daily Telegraph*”, and heard the tapping of thousands of footsteps hurrying to line the route. “I remember seeing de Gaulle almost alone on the steps. That was so complex. No great playwright or novelist could have captured it.

“Now I’m near the end of my life what mesmerises me are the limits of all fiction. Neither Shakespeare nor Dante could have invented Stephen Hawking, what he is, what he’s doing. From the tiny edge of one eyelid, he’s at the centre of the universe.”

The yellow bird

Steiner is a denizen of the edges, too. He has spent much of his life in a ringside seat of the humanities, describing himself as “the chirp bird



‘Now I’m near the end of my life what mesmerises me are the limits of all fiction. Neither Shakespeare nor Dante could have invented Stephen Hawking. From the tiny edge of one eyelid, he’s at the centre of the universe’

Seat of learning: George Steiner in the chair which in its time has held Jorge Luis Borges, Bruce Chatwin, Robert Pirsig and Arthur Koestler



'Animals render him helpless in a way that humans do not'

At home: "I belong to a rather bizarre dying species of profoundly committed intellectuals. This room is an encyclopaedia of lost humanism"

on the rhinoceros", after a little yellow bird he saw in Africa that perched on the rhino and "chirped like mad to alert everyone that a rhino was coming". In the same way, he says, a good teacher and critic will tell you, "This is the real thing. Here's why. Please read it, read it."

On the empty yellow chair opposite have sat writers who have moved Steiner to exclaim "My God, this is wonderful". Into this room in May 1991 shuffled Jorge Luis Borges, the blind magus of Argentina. To Steiner, "Borges stands for a certain moment in the history of the imagination. Even briefly, he has left a kind of spell."

Steiner says: "I've never met a person who seemed to need eyelids less. We were at the door where you just came in. 'It's going to rain soon.' I asked, 'How do you know that?' He said, 'Don't you notice the change in the smell of the flowers?'"

At the time, Steiner had two young children.

"Borges sat on that chair and told them stories. He asked me not to be in the room. We drove him to the English faculty where he was delivering a big lecture. I took him to the door. He said, 'You won't want to go in there'. He had a supernatural finesse of empathy. The English faculty had said I would not be given a post, so I had no access to the staff room."

Another occupier of the yellow chair was Bruce Chatwin - on his way back from Scotland, where he claimed to have been shooting stags. Steiner says: "I have a theory about beautiful men. It's difficult to be beautiful. And Bruce was truly beautiful. He sat on that chair and read at length from the manuscript of *Songlines*. I'd got on to Mr Shawn at the *New Yorker* [where from 1966 Steiner had replaced Edmund Wilson as chief critic]. 'This is someone you must use.' His Patagonia book had blown me with happiness. Mr Shawn turned him

down. He was a man of legendary discretion. All he would convey was a deep sense of distrust, that he didn't believe a word."

Then there was Robert Pirsig, author of *Zen & the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*. Steiner was doing what he normally did with unsolicited manuscripts, cramming the package into his wastepaper basket, when he read the first sentence and thought "Good God, something tremendous has landed on my desk. I'd never read a sentence like it."

"Do you remember the sentence?"

"I can see by my watch, without taking my hand from the left grip of the cycle, that it is eight-thirty in the morning."

"Pirsig came to see me and thank me - I helped launch Zen and reviewed it - and he told me he had written a new novel even better. But it wasn't better at all." Steiner did not reveal to Pirsig what he had told his wife Zara. There would never be another book from this man worth reading.

"Why do you think so many distinguished people want to interview you?"

"I belong to a rather bizarre dying species of profoundly committed intellectuals - the word was originally Russian, *intelligentsia*," and makes a sweep with his hand. "This room is an encyclopaedia of lost humanism. I have here what I believe Cambridge and the Bodleian do NOT have. A first magazine edition of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*. The first edition of Heidegger's *Being and Time*. And the house talisman!"

He leaps up to pluck it down, a thin blue book he struggles to remove from its cardboard case.

"What is it?"

"Wait, wait, a little patience. You are like me."

With reverence, he holds it up - to reveal a name stamped on the last page in mauve ink.

"F. KAFKA"

"Is this... No...?"

"Yes, yes, one of only three books to survive from his library!"

I read the title, *Was du tust, das tue recht*, and note that it is printed in Stuttgart in 1910.

"What you do will be right," he translates. "A pedagogic, completely undistinguished thesis on women's education."

"Have you read it?"

"No, the book is of no interest. But I have often held it. And feel a shiver, a huge shiver down my back. To imagine holding something Franz Kafka held!"

Walking with Freud

Like Kafka, Steiner's father Frederick - "an austere, difficult man" - worked for a bank in Vienna. In 1921 he fell in love with Else Franzos and proposed. With a conjurer's flourish, Steiner produced a visitor's card, showing a date scrawled in black ink, "3.4.1921", and some handwritten words in German, "with warm wishes for your happiness in your marriage."

An italicised name on the card explains all.

"Prof Dr. Freud und Frau"

Steiner can't help musing: "He's one of 10 or 12 great men of the world, but he went to enormous trouble to have his title of Professor."



From "Prof Dr. Freud und Frau": Sigmund's best wishes for Steiner's father's wedding

Sigmund Freud and Frederick Steiner were friends. They'd walk in Vienna, in the hills around, and talk together. Steiner's connective mind finds it impossible to imagine that Hitler, Freud, Mahler, Steiner's father, did not pass each other on the Ring, walking. "It's inescapable. They are there, in the same city, for two or three years."

Smelling the wind, his father uprooted his family to Paris where Steiner was born in 1929. The doctor who delivered him was Carl Weiss, who six years later assassinated the American presidential candidate, Huey Long, in Louisiana.

"Do you know Long's last words?" I ask.

But of course. "God, don't let me die. I have so much to do."

Steiner was five when he heard a sentence that he says formed his whole life, after watching from a window a Paris crowd shouting "Death to the Jews!" The sentence was uttered by his father: "You must never be frightened; what you're looking at is called history."

That Steiner didn't meet the fate of all but two of his Jewish classmates in his Paris lycée was thanks to a tip-off from a German businessman in neutral New York. In January 1940, in a toilet in the Wall Street Club, Steiner's father bumped into a Siemens executive he knew, who grabbed him. "You better listen to me whether you like it or not. We're coming into France very soon. Get your family out at any price." By the time Nazi tanks powered into Paris five months later, the Steiners were in America.

In the white-hot summer of 1943, another decisive moment. "I was on a suburban holiday outside New York in White Plains when in a doctor's office I see a copy of *Life* magazine, a double-page spread of members of the Soviet Academy of Science, a description of their specialities - radiology, biochemistry, mathematics." Aged 14, Steiner was forcibly struck that these leaders were not artists, but scientists. "I was transported with ambition one day to do something like that. I can't explain, but it was absolutely decisive. My only ambition was



Steiner and his books: "The idea was to have the 1,200 volumes I needed most. It absolutely didn't work. I have to keep running back"

to study science at Chicago." He had good enough teachers there. Enrico Fermi lectured him on physics. Harold Urey on chemistry. But it was no good.

"I was told I was technically an idiot. I had the memory training of the French lycée system, but not a spark of creativity. If, as a certain Jim Watson was, I had been sent to biology... As it was, almost heartbroken, I came to literature and philosophy."

From Chicago, he graduated to Harvard, next to Oxford, where his thesis, which became *The Death of Tragedy*, was rejected ("A touch dazzling, wouldn't you say?"); then to *The Economist*, to Princeton, and in 1961 to Cambridge. Bruised at not being made a professor, he considered returning to America, but a conversation with his father in the Oak Room of the Plaza put a kybosh on that. Steiner was listing the advantages of American universities, when his father said after a long silence: "How sad that Hitler has won." Steiner wrote: "Nothing was strong enough in me to bear the immense world of sad disdain in that remark." Steiner elected to remain in Europe.

Poplar, willow, elm

He fetches a key and takes me in small, delicate steps out into his English garden.

"Those are my poplars, that's my willow."

"Are you good on trees?"

"I don't talk to them."

"What's that one?"

"My elm!"

The lawn glitters with an earlier rain, like the one he met his wife in more than 50 years ago, in London (Zara told me: "In came this figure with a tiny umbrella and rain pouring down"). They have been together ever since. "The only divorce possibility, the one casus belli is that," and he motions at the wooden fence. "My wife has heightened that fence because a deer comes and eats the flowers. I say to her, 'You can go to the florist'."

Animals render him helpless in a way that humans do not. Following a succession of English

sheepdogs, he now has a "very shy" rescue dog called Muzz (short for "muzzle"), who pads after us. "Anyone who harms an animal in front of me, I would gladly kill. It's as total with me as breathing." It has even affected Steiner's hitherto unconditional love of Proust. "We now know so much of Proust's torture of animals is true. Biography can be the enemy of insight."

Our walk today takes us from his house to his purpose-built study in the garden, and back. A journey of less than a hundred yards. Yet, I like to think, an illustration of Borges's celebrated parable: of the ancient wanderer who draws a map of everywhere he has been in his life, and discovers that he has delineated his own face.

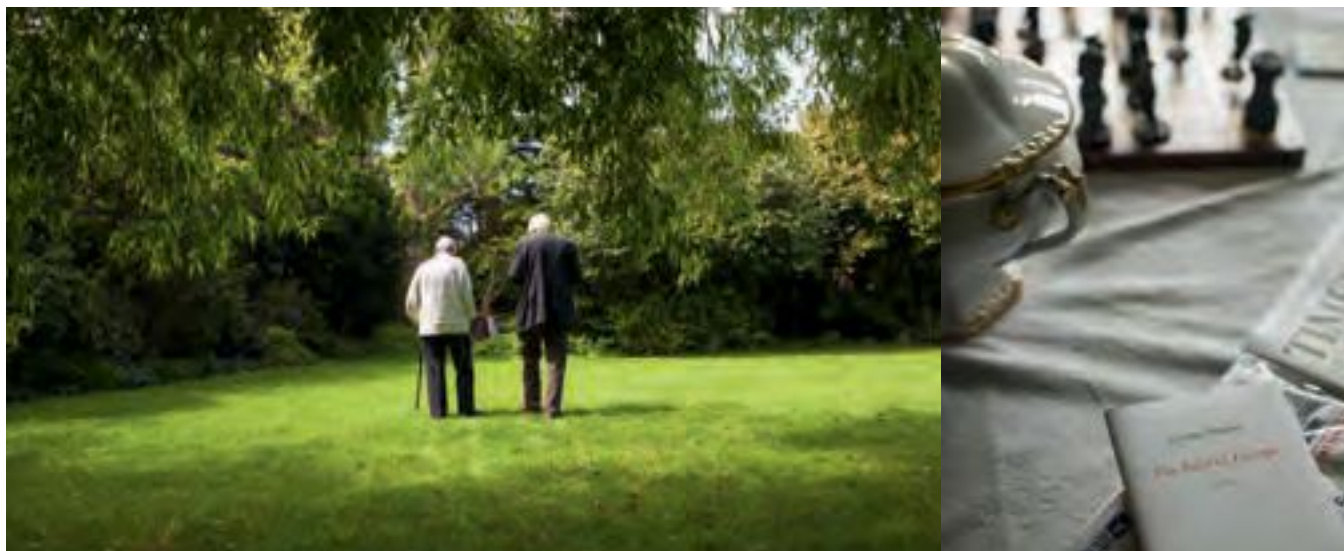
His first walks were in Paris. Rue La Fontaine, Place Victor Hugo. "In summer as a child I would go to our retreat in Normandy where Monet painted, Etretat." Later, based in Geneva, Steiner discovered mountain-climbing, and scaled the rock-face of the Salève, as the student Borges had done, back in the days when he could see.

"What's your favourite walk?"

"In the Jura, near where Courbet had a house, a group of hills above Ornans; a wonderful landscape combining ancient reminders of civilisation with wild country - bits of Roman and Gallic fortifications and very exciting traces of the Burgundian wars."

Steiner writes of the importance of walking in his latest book, *The Idea of Europe*. Kant's chronometrically precise traverse of Königsberg. The rambles of Kierkegaard through Copenhagen. The portly Coleridge routinely covering 30 miles per diem across difficult, mountainous ground, composing poetry or intricate theological arguments as he strode. It's something that differentiates us from America, Steiner believes. "One does not go on foot from one American town to the next."

Europe, by contrast, has been moulded and humanised by human feet. It's not too much to say that our entire philosophy has been conditioned by walking, by the same simple action of putting



Light and shade: “Europe is the place,” Steiner reminds us in *The Idea of Europe* (right), “where Goethe’s garden almost borders on Buchenwald”

one foot before another that brings us in no time to our destination.

Steiner inserts the key, invites me inside.

His study is a pentagon with a pyramidal roof. “I designed this from a very simple set of mathematical dimensions, to maximise content in relation to space.”

“Who chose the turquoise carpet?”

“Zara.”

Light from an overhead pane falls onto a desk occupied by a sizable electric typewriter. He sits here every morning after picking a book at random. “I take a paragraph and translate it into my four languages” - writing the translations on a scrap of paper that he throws into the wastepaper basket. He calls his habit “a musical exercise in being the plural me”. Then, after replying to the half dozen letters he receives every day, he reads for an hour or two.

Behind, to the sides, and facing the desk are more books, wall to packed wall, defining the whole width of his horizon. “The idea was to have the 1,200 volumes I needed most. It absolutely didn’t work. I have to keep running back.”

He introduces them, like friends. On the opposite shelves: Nietzsche, Hegel. On the left wall: Celan, the Frankfurt School. “The blue volumes?” “Those are Lukács, signed.” Next to him, Ernst Bloch. “Here’s Benjamin, Adorno...”

“Not many women,” I say.

“That’s not my fault. They didn’t write the books.”

“Which would you most mind a robber stealing?”

Steiner nods at the topmost shelf behind his desk. “My household god. Coleridge. Even in his worst moments he is so human. Even in his worst moments, there’s not one when he doesn’t come at you as a terribly hurt human being. There are 30 volumes or more. You’d have to come with a wheelbarrow.”

“There will be a war”

Back in his drawing-room, our photographer asks

Steiner to pose in the yellow chair. Once seated, he recalls another formidable writer, Arthur Koestler, sitting in this chair and weeping that, yet again, he had been overlooked by the Nobel committee. ““Oh, no,” I told him, ‘you wrote *Darkness at Noon*. You changed history’.”

I ask: “What would you like to have written?”

“An absolutely first rate piece of fiction.”

“What do you think prevented you?”

“I have been too scattered and dispersed, and loved too many things passionately.”

Or did something else constrain him? Even as he chirped out the names of important authors for us to read, he continually warned that the rhino on which he perched was a trampling beast. That the humanities do not humanise per se, but too often condone bestiality. “Europe is the place,” he reminds us in *The Idea of Europe*, “where Goethe’s garden almost borders on Buchenwald.”

Steiner is pessimistic that we have never been more brutal to each other, and a catastrophe is looming. “There will be a war. I can be more precise. It’s coming.” An Islamic religious war that sets up the next Armageddon, with hundreds of thousands of dead Sunni and Shia. “Those are implacable hatreds. We already can’t stop the landings in Italy of boat people. It’s in flood.”

Still, he takes heart that in catastrophic times “people will be back to reading, back to thinking, back to music. Don’t worry, destiny does not like emptiness”. And tells me of the Chechen attack on a Russian school in Grozny. “The children had been three days without water or food, but with a brave teacher who, on the third day, said, ‘Let’s pray together to God and the Gospels’. The children refused. ‘We are praying to Harry Potter’s wizard, and he will come’. And the children were right.” ■



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NOT WAVING BUT DROWNING

As Europe watches the grim spectacle of Greece's economic crisis, Andy Davis explains how a tidal wave of public debt, growing faster than sluggish economies can repay it, could overwhelm us all

Newsweek
essay



If you want to know what it looks like when a country drowns in its own debts, there are few better examples in history than the hair-raising spectacle unfolding in the south-eastern corner of the eurozone. Greece's figures are extraordinary. By the end of last year, the country's public debt in nominal terms stood at 177% of its annual economic output and it was relying on the life support of regular cash infusions from the European Union, European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Although critics of Athens argue that the true value of its debts is much lower because the country has been given decades extra to pay and the interest rate on its borrowings has been cut, there are nonetheless few countries in the world that have managed to run up a comparable mountain of borrowing. Unfortunately, several of those that do exist happen to be in Europe: Italy had government debts of 132% of gross domestic product by the end of last year; Portugal was on 130%; Ireland 110%, and Spain 98%. Of the leading nations, only Japan surpassed them all with a whopping 230%.

In Greece's case, however, you have to scratch the surface of this astronomical 177% to see what has actually happened. Data from the European Commission and the bloc's statistical service, Eurostat, show that Greece owes around €320bn. But although this figure has gone up a lot since the financial crisis (in spite of the first debt write-off in 2012), Greek public debt is no longer exploding. In fact, it's been relatively stable for the past couple of years. Instead, the economy that has to carry its weight is imploding - it's the relentless draining away of Greek economic activity that has pushed the debt burden close to 180%, not the accumulation of yet more borrowing. In 2011, Greece's public debt was €356bn and its debt to GDP ratio was 171%. Three years later, the debt pile had been reduced to €317bn, but the ratio had climbed to 177%.

Arguably, then, Greece is not drowning

in debt. It has already drowned. It may seem fanciful to suggest that other countries could be in danger of a similar fate, but equally, it is probably dangerous to assume that Greece is unique: a spectacle we can observe from a safe distance with a mixture of voyeurism and horror.

A borrowing binge

Writing in the *Daily Telegraph* recently, Jeremy Warner recalled returning to Greece

money to fund ever more speculative development projects. It also became clear during the crisis that banks all over the world were employing far more debt in their activities than regulators now believe is safe. Many of those debt-fuelled booms have now subsided and in some cases, such as US and UK households, the debt burdens have actually gone down a bit as people have repaid or defaulted on part of their borrowing - also known as deleveraging.

But that is not to imply that the world's debts peaked with the financial crisis and are now subsiding. Quite the opposite. In a study published this year entitled *Debt and (not much) Deleveraging*, the McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) pointed out that the world's debts had carried on growing very rapidly even after the financial crisis. At the end of 2000 as the credit boom gathered pace, the global debt pile stood at \$87trn, MGI reported. By the end of 2007 the binge was reaching its peak and global debt had jumped to \$142trn - an increase of 63% in just seven years. Then the financial crisis struck, but the rise carried on regardless. Another seven years on at the end of 2014, global debt had grown by a further by \$57trn (or 40%) to reach \$199trn.

If this sounds worrying, the MGI paper highlighted another reason for concern: the world's debts continue to expand more rapidly than its economic output. In 2000, world debt was 246% of GDP; in 2007, 269%; and by 2014, the ratio had grown another 17 percentage points to reach 286% of GDP. The world is a long way from turning into a larger version of Greece, admittedly, but the direction of travel is clear. Our debts are growing faster than the ability of our economies (at a given level of interest rates) to service and repay them.

The critical distinction

"We should be very worried about it," says George Magnus, a leading economic commentator. "It's not unprecedented:

Our debts are growing faster than the ability of our economies to service and repay them

just before the financial crisis and being amazed at the number of people driving new German cars in a country that had been obviously poor when he was last there in the 1970s. "How was it possible to cram so much development into such a short space of time?" Warner asked. We now know it wasn't possible, but the path that Greece followed in the decade or more leading up to the financial crisis, although extreme, was by no means unique - many countries in the developed world saw big build-ups of debt, whether by households, companies, financial institutions or governments.

Consumers in the US, UK, Ireland and Spain in particular went on a borrowing binge as their property markets boomed, while the construction sectors in all these countries also loaded up with borrowed

if you go back hundreds of years there have been previous occasions when national debt levels have risen even higher than they are in Britain, the US or elsewhere today, but never in peacetime.” This distinction is critical, he argues, because in previous high-debt episodes, such as in the West during the aftermath of the Second World War, the resumption of normal civilian activity resulted in a pick-up in economic growth and, eventually, enabled the debt piles to come down again.

Arguably, we should not be surprised that the debt figure has continued to climb since the financial crisis and recession that followed. During the boom years leading up to 2007, the private sector – households and businesses – borrowed very heavily to expand, acquire assets, particularly property, and to consume. As boom turned to recession, they slowed their rate of borrowing and in some cases, particularly US households, even reduced it by a combination of default, bankruptcy and repayment.

This is part of a well-understood pattern that follows a debt-fuelled financial crisis, says Richard Dobbs of the MGI. “Typically debt goes up after the crisis hits and [government] debt rises even if the consumer deleverages. What happens is that as the economy slows down welfare payments go up, tax revenues go down and the government delivers fiscal stimulus to the economy so the debt level for the government sector grows.”

In previous episodes, he says, consumers and businesses have pulled in their horns and government borrowing has carried on rising for a few years to help cushion the impact of the slowdown until an eventual rebound in economic activity allows welfare payments to fall, tax revenues to increase and the debt pile to stabilise and start declining.

The big question is whether we can expect this pattern to repeat itself and to what extent debt burdens will eventually be reduced. The answer to this question naturally depends on a wide variety of factors. First, as Dobbs points out, different considerations apply in different parts of the world economy. A large proportion of the increase in debt that has occurred since the crisis has happened in emerging markets and is a normal part of the

A vicious circle

Aside from the tendency of emerging economies to increase their appetite for borrowing as their economies develop, there is a range of forces at work that suggest the level of private and government borrowing in the developed world is unlikely to stop growing in the foreseeable future.

Charles Dumas, chairman of the macro-economic forecaster Lombard

Street Research, points out that the world’s growing stock of debt must be viewed as the flipside of another phenomenon, the world’s “excess savings”. On this analysis, a huge and continuing abundance of savings, especially among countries in Northern Europe and East Asia, has produced unparalleled quantities of money available to lend. This pushes down the cost of borrowing and encourages borrowers, both the private sector and governments, to take on more debt. This trend of falling interest rates has been running for more than 30 years, and, having reached a crisis point in 2008, it received further impetus from the actions of major central banks, which cut their reference rates close to zero and instituted quantitative easing. “We’re living in a world with too much saving, which means too little

consumer spending and too much debt,” says Dumas. “That tends to induce people to go for austerity, which reduces consumer spending and perpetuates the problem of too much saving. You’ve got a vicious circle here that I don’t think people have solved.”

Similarly, it appears that the measures taken to help cushion the impact of the financial crisis are also contributing to the problem. It is widely accepted nowadays that but for moves to cut interest rates to zero and make vast and growing piles of debt more sustainable, the world economy would have gone through a far deeper and more damaging recession than the one it suffered after 2007. But ultra-low interest rates also have unintended consequences, argues Magnus: “They don’t discourage the continued accumulation of debt.”



A world on edge: countries with very high levels of debt are particularly vulnerable to economic shocks

“financial deepening” that we should expect to see as their economies develop and demand for credit and the ability to service it both increase. “Irrespective of this crisis, emerging markets are on a path to more debt and that’s perfectly normal,” he argues. However, others are alarmed both at the rate at which debt has risen in some emerging countries since the crisis, especially China, and at the extent to which emerging market borrowers are taking on debt denominated in dollars rather than their own currency, which will make these debts harder to service should the dollar exchange rate move against them.

These steadily rising government debt burdens, however, face a series of long-term challenges that will ultimately call their sustainability into question. First, levels of debt that are manageable when interest rates are extremely low can become much less affordable should rates start to rise. Second, says

Dobbs, many of the countries with high debt burdens are undergoing a transition to a period when their economic growth will be slower than in the past and therefore their ability to service rapidly growing levels of debt is likely to come under pressure.

"If productivity growth stays the same as it is now, the global economy is going to fall from growing at around 3.6%, which is the average of the past 50 years, to around 2% over the next 50," he says. The rates of slowing will differ from one country to another, but the effects of this are likely to be very marked in some cases - there are projected to be 15 million fewer working people in Germany by 2050 than there are today and as a result McKinsey predicts that the country's average growth rate will halve over the next 50 years.

A number of economies will therefore find themselves squeezed between static or declining populations of working-age taxpayers and the need to meet rising welfare obligations that date from an era that has gone - when growth rates were higher, working populations were larger and more generous welfare payments were affordable.

Tackling this will demand a whole range of reforms, particularly the austerity involved in cutting welfare entitlements, but even so it is also likely to require a continued build-up of debt. For example, the Israeli finance ministry recently forecast that on that country's current trends, government debt would rise from 67% of GDP now to 170% over the next half-century.

The challenge, therefore, is to ensure that the kind of ratio of debt to economic output that appears completely unrealistic

'We're living in a world with too much saving, which means too little consumer spending and too much debt'

countries that experienced debt crises in the 1990s such as Scandinavia and some East Asian economies were able to devalue their currencies very rapidly and export their way back to growth and debt sustainability thanks to buoyant demand in other regions. But this is a much harder trick to pull off in the aftermath of a global financial crisis, when everyone is simultaneously trying to export their way out of the same hole, and it largely explains why major economies have all at different times attempted to devalue - a process resembling a global game of pass the parcel that Brazil's then-finance minister, Guido Mantega, dubbed a "currency war" five years ago. "Japan has become a serious rogue factor in the world economy," observes Dumas, "because their devaluations are part of what undermined the eurozone."

One of the lessons of Greece's economic debacle is undoubtedly that its membership of the eurozone has prevented it from taking a swifter route to recovery that would have involved a deep devaluation of its currency to make itself more competitive in world markets and enable export-led growth. Another, however, is that countries with very high levels of debt are particularly vulnerable to economic shocks, such as the one that hit Greece and the rest of the world in 2008. For other countries that are peering into a future in which their debt levels continue to rise, this has to be the biggest worry. Were something major to go wrong - such as a crisis in China, for example, where debt levels are rising at nearly 20 percentage points a year, more than twice as fast as its economy is growing - their ability to withstand the shockwaves might well be limited.

for Greece today can become credible for other countries several decades from now.

Global pass the parcel

For the moment, it seems that the routes to escape a debt crisis that have usually worked in the past are not going to be available this time. In particular,



Broke and broken nation: Greece is not drowning in debt. It has already drowned

It is clear then that the quantity of debt in the world is far more likely to increase than to shrink in the decades ahead, and that therefore highly indebted countries are going to have to learn to live with much higher debt burdens than they have today. Ensuring interest rates do not rise too far or too fast will be critical and austerity in one form or another will continue to feature. There may be some respite if we can achieve a return to modest inflation that would help to erode the value of our outstanding debts and make them more manageable, points out George Magnus. But most agree that we will also have to



find ways to avoid paying back all that we have borrowed.

Economic sleight of hand

Dobbs argues that “debt monetisation” is emerging as part of the answer to this problem. Already, the US, UK and Japanese central banks hold large chunks of their respective governments’ debts and are returning the interest payments on these portions to their national treasuries - in effect, therefore, these governments are not servicing significant percentages of their outstanding borrowing. If these piles of debt on which the governments are paying no interest are excluded from the calculation, MGI says that the US’s debt to GDP ratio drops from 89% to 76%, the UK’s from 92%

to 71% and Japan’s from 234% to 190%. Performing the economic sleight of hand involved in successful debt monetisation requires both luck and good judgment - if it goes wrong, the consequences could be dire, says Dobbs, invoking memories of the hyperinflation that ravaged Germany’s Weimar Republic. “That’s why I don’t think you’ll ever hear any policymakers talk about [monetisation] as a possibility. It happens, but I think that quite rightly there’s a fear that if you talk about it publicly too much you could be accused of doing something wrong and you could have a collapse.”

Given the trends that are under way, however, there may be little alternative but to make debt monetisation - and the test that it poses to the credibility of our

monetary system - part of our long-term response. “We live in a world where debt ratios need to come down,” says Charles Dumas, “and there’s nothing on the horizon which is going to make them come down in a secular way. A small cyclical improvement is all that we can hope for.”

With a few exceptions, such as Greece, we are not yet drowning in debt. But the levels will go on rising and we have no choice but to learn how to swim in it. ■



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WEEKEND

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HERE FOR THE BEER – AND MUCH MORE

It's not just what you'd expect – the finest of lagers and the whitest of sausages – Munich also offers stunning art, charming architecture and very gracious living



The most Latin city north of the Alps, it has been called, though those who call it that have their

tongues stuck firmly in their cheeks. There are restaurants and coffee houses here that you would not necessarily find in the Rhineland or Pomerania, and there are tanned, expensively dressed people – peacocks, if you like – of the kind one sees in Italy. But there is no getting away from the fact that Munich is a German city; more specifically, a Bavarian city. And you can't get much more German than that.

Arrive at the Hauptbahnhof, Munich's superb main railway station, early in the morning, and you will see folk piling off carriages from Passau and Landshut to enjoy their first, foaming beer of the day, washing down, as often as not, one of those white Bavarian sausages. Come back at twilight and they will be there again, quaffing more than one beer this time. They will be sober, too. The German is a serious performer with a stein in his hand.

Beer and Bavaria: it's such a cliché that it has become a joke. But any tour d'horizon of this beautiful city should begin with that first beer of the day because malted barley has played such an important part in its identity. It was in Bavaria in 1516 that the Reinheitsgebot, the famous pure beer ruling, took root in law and, to this day, Munich is the most significant brewing



town in a nation that brews the most celebrated beers (as opposed to ales) in the world.

To get the best out of Munich it is not necessary to attend the Oktoberfest (which begins in September), and it is certainly not compulsory to spend your

money in the Hofbräuhaus, that most overrated of tourist attractions. The finest beers to be found here are Augustiner and – make a special effort to sup it – Andechs, whose beers take their name from the Benedictine monastery just

outside the city. One of Munich's best-known restaurants, Andechser am Dom, hard by the Frauenkirche in the centre of town, is the best place to drain a toothsome helles or two. You can search high and low but, as many an experienced toper can tell you, there is no finer beer to be drunk this side of paradise.

Although Munich exults in its beer, there is much more to it. Culturally this city is a powerhouse like few others. It has one great orchestra (the Bavarian Radio Symphony) and one very good one, a first-rate opera house, and dozens of world-ranking art collections and museums. You could begin your gallery-going on 1 January, and by 31

Field Guide

How to get there: You can fly from worldwide to Munich airport, which is a 45-minute drive from the centre.

Where to stay: There are any number of options, as you would expect in a cosmopolitan city, but the beautifully restored Hotel Opéra stands out.

What to watch: The films of one of Munich's most gifted sons: Werner Herzog. Perhaps his documentary *My Best Fiend* in which he relates how, at 13, he lived in the same building as his wild future muse Klaus Kinski. Kinski inhabited an attic room filled knee-high with dry leaves.

While you're there

Visit the **Asamkirche**, a late baroque fantasy rebuilt after being damaged in the war.



Best of the Bavarian capital: the Andechser am Dom bar and, top right, the Lenbachhaus gallery

December there would still be something new to see.

For form's sake it is wise to start in the Alte Pinakothek, the collection of Old Master paintings that may be seen as a pendant to the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. The rooms drip with masterpieces, not just Dürer, Cranach and the early Flemish painters, but Raphael, Titian, Van Dyck, Rubens, and, delightfully, the urchin paintings of Murillo. Not to be missed: Dürer's self-portrait, one of the works that define our civilisation.

Over the road from the AP stands the Neue Pinakothek,

which you want to do on another day. The Pinakothek der Moderne, featuring the best of the German Expressionists, is not far away, and very good it is, too. The gallery not to be missed, however, is the Lenbachhaus, which has the largest collection of Kandinskys in the world.

It was in Bavaria, shortly before the First World War, that Wassily Kandinsky forged the Blue Rider school with Paul Klee, Franz Marc, August Macke and Gabriele Münter. Here, simply by moving from one room to the next, you can see how painting moved from the figurative to the abstract. Yes, Cézanne was dissolving perspective a decade before, but it is in Munich that pure abstraction was born. There are other fine painters in the Lenbachhaus, notably Lovis Corinth, but the Kandinskys supply the lustre.

Work your way across town from the Lenbachhaus to find, opposite the Residenz, the yellow-stoned Theatinerkirche, a fine example of Bavarian baroque, and a reminder of Munich's profound Catholic identity. Founded in 1158 by Duke Henry the Lion, Munich has always been the capital of a dukedom or kingdom that is a state in itself, as locals are happy to remind you.

Bavaria was ruled by the Wittelsbachs from 1180 until 1918 and it remains "Freistaat Bayern", a country within a nation. The blue and white flags of Bavaria fly everywhere, as a symbol of independence and, other Germans might say, defiance. It is certainly true that many people see themselves as Bavarians first, then Germans. "Prussian pigs" they have been known to call their friends in the north, and



Berliners are not slow to repay them in their own coinage.

To see the Theatinerkirche at ease take a seat on the south side of the Hofgarten, between the Residenz and the great Englischer Garten. In these lovely gardens - quiet, too - you may sit all afternoon and never tire of the view, or the mood. It is a special place to take a book, or just nod off. In the heart of a busy city here is repose. Then, for something more lively, stroll through the English Garden towards the Chinese Tower, where the beer flows all day and everybody behaves peaceably.

Gracious living is the mark of Munich. Walk along Maximilianstrasse, from the State Opera to the River Isar, and you will find wealth in the hotels, the shops and the restaurants. You will also find people at ease with themselves. There is a quality of life here that matches the standard of living, and that is not always the case. Furthermore it is a quality of life that is enjoyed by many of the people who live in Munich. They work hard, and they make the most of their idle hours, all year round.

To see this quality of life in flesh and blood, walk along the

Isar towards the mighty Deutsches Museum, that repository of German industrial and scientific culture that is one of Munich's jewels. Turn right by St Luke's, the Protestant church, pick your way through the pleasant streets that lead to the ring road, and you will come across the Gasthaus Isarthor, a small neighbourhood restaurant that also serves as a local.

Seated in this homely, wood-panelled refuge, with the first glass of Augustiner marked on the coaster (and another on the way), the visitor may see Munich in its truest colours. The grub is excellent, so don't hold back. Bavarian black pudding, washed down with a gallon of pilsner, is a treat that never palls. Slap bang in the middle of a city that is international class in all respects here is a slice of authentic Munich life that, in its own way, matches the glories of the Alte Pinakothek. In matters great and small, this is a city to treasure.



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WHO ARE YOU CALLING 'PRIMITIVE'?

The consistently outstanding aesthetic quality of the exhibits in Nigerian Arts Revisited gives the lie to European artistic snobbery



Nick Foulkes
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The Barbier Mueller Museum in Geneva is one of the unsung treasures of Calvin's lakeside city. I have a weakness for Geneva, it speaks to my latent bourgeois aspirations and I find the sense of quiet order that prevails in the city rather appealing. There are times when I almost find myself wanting to live in Geneva and one of those was the other day with the sun warming the time-weathered walls and smooth cobbles of the historic city on the hill.

The Barbier Mueller Museum deserves to be better known, but I am secretly rather glad it is not, as I feel that I am a member of a privileged little club of devotees. I first came across it when I was seated next to its co-founder and eponym Monique Barbier Mueller at a dinner given by Vacheron Constantin in the Temple of Dendur in the Met in New York seven or eight years ago.

Although not a young woman she has the energy of a person half her age and the intrepid character of someone much less fearful than I am.

She was talking about making trips to Africa, which got us onto the subject of African art, and it transpired that her father had started building a collection of it when, in the years following the Great War and the Crash of 1929, he could no longer afford the Cézannes and Van Goghs that he and his sister had collected in better times. He moved to Paris, where life was cheaper, and for a while lived in an artist's studio next to Nicolas de Staël.

As a child Monique would accompany him on his Saturday visits to the Marché aux Puces where he would meet dealers in artefacts from "primitive" cultures - the sort of stuff that inspired Picasso - creating a collection that would form the nucleus of this charming museum in the heart of old Geneva. Thitherto such pieces had been valued for their ethnographic or anthropological interest, but Monique's father clearly perceived them as works of art rather than merely geographically specific curios, and looking at the exhibition "Nigerian Arts Revisited", curated by noted anthropologist Nigel Barley, formerly of the British Museum, it is easy to see what his eye recognised among the flea markets of 1930s Paris.

Just how prescient he was becomes clear when it is understood that at the same

time he was filling his suitcases with trouvaillies, some of the earliest ceramic sculptures, made between 800BC and 200AD, were just then being discovered on the Jos Plateau in central Nigeria.

Barley has put this show together from the museum's permanent collection of some 4,000 pieces and, as he puts it in his catalogue, "What most impresses is the consistently outstanding aesthetic quality of the individual works", which is why I placed inverted commas around the word primitive earlier. I kept returning to one of the exhibits: called simply "cup on an equestrian base", it could have been executed by Giacometti.

I have to say I have a weakness for the macabre, so the human skull covered with leathery skin and mounted on a rattan base ticked the sort of box that the Pitt-Rivers in Oxford used to in my youth. Similarly arresting is a headdress mask of a female figure with serpentine coils emerging from her head that recall simultaneously the Medusa and the ridged texture of the horns of African plains game. Classical legend also comes to mind when looking at an exquisite terracotta Janus head with two sensitively worked faces. Created sometime between the 3rd and 9th centuries AD,

“

The Barbier Mueller Museum deserves to be better known, but I am secretly rather glad it is not

while Europe descended into the Dark Ages, it is the sort of piece that would make much of the work carried out in Europe during this period seem "primitive".

While frustrating, the difficulty in dating some of these pieces only enhances their mysterious appeal, an allure that this exhibition enhances with the sort of lighting that one might call moody: pieces seem to emerge from the darkness. Lighting is deftly deployed.

For instance, the shadows cast by a 2nd or 3rd century AD head of a bearded man bring to mind the figures of Easter Island.

Barley recalls how, when visiting the African floor of the British Museum, William Rubin, the late MOMA curator and director, said: "Show me African material but, I beg you, tell me absolutely nothing at all about it or you ruin it for me as art." And it is indeed possible to visit this show and simply experience by turns the mystery, delicacy and sheer effect of these pieces.

Macabre and mysterious: the show ranges from a human skull, left, covered with leathery skin and mounted on a rattan base to elegant standing figures, right



FLYING INTO THE VOLCANO

Drones are letting film-makers go where no camera has gone before – but not every drone pilot can be the next Spielberg



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Imagine a volcano spewing red-hot chunks of lava. Hovering next to it, you watch as it coughs up the Earth's fiery innards. You then fly straight into the trajectory of the half-liquid rocks. Miraculously, you do not get hit.

Such images may sound like the stuff of dreams. Yet recently film-makers posted spectacular shots on the internet that showed exactly that: an eruption filmed from the top. Neither did they have to risk their lives, nor invest vast amounts of money. What would until recently have been prohibitively expensive and far too dangerous to accomplish was made possible by cutting-edge gadgets: drones.

Meanwhile, another technology is set to revolutionise filmmaking on the ground. Gimbals are portable harnesses into which cameras are strapped. Any wobble caused by walking with the camera is cancelled out by tiny motors. These mounts might soon replace labour-intensive and costly devices such as dollies and steadycams. Just as drones have become cheap enough for the consumer, it is only a matter of time until gimbals, too, will be available to the general public.

These inventions might herald the second phase



Explosive talents: drone filming, here of a volcano, is the next technological revolution after the ground-breaking use of digital cameras by Thomas Vinterberg, Lars von Trier and Susanne Bier, below left to right

of a revolution that started in the 1990s, when digital cameras were introduced.

Filmmakers then sensed that a new era had dawned and, in a keynote speech at the 2000 Cannes festival, a young director, Samira Makhmalbaf, predicted that cameras would soon be as readily available as pencils. This would unleash new auteur film-makers who, in the days of expensive celluloid,

had not had access to the means of film production.

Today, there is a digital camera in every mobile phone. Filmmaking has become totally “democratic” in the sense that anyone can afford the necessary equipment and distribute their clips to a worldwide audience.

Yet has Makhmalbaf's second prediction come true, that digitalisation would allow more talents to emerge? There is at least some evidence for this. A whole wave of directors splashed out of Denmark in the 1990s. They cleverly marketed the limitations of low-budget digital film-making as an artistic statement, declaring wobbly, hand-held shots as part of a cinematic “dogma”.

Within the space of 10 years, some of the world's most renowned auteurs emerged from that little country, including such international stars as Lars

von Trier, Susanne Bier and Thomas Vinterberg.

Yet could the Danish caper be repeated today? With audiences accustomed to high-end imagery everywhere from glitzy advertising to computer-generated animation, this seems questionable, and, to me at least, it just does not feel as if there are more great films out there now than in the pre-digital era. Professional equipment does not make everyman the next Spielberg or von Trier.

More craft than art, the nuts and bolts of film production require commitment to be fully mastered. If one is not able to hold the attention of an audience for 90 minutes or so, neither a digital camera nor a glossy drone shot will remedy that problem.

It may well turn out that the number of people with a certain knack for a visual alchemy of images and sounds is always stable. If that is the case, the unfolding second wave of “democratisation” will mainly benefit those few who have talents anyway.



IN MEMORY OF A WAR ZONE

In Beirut, a beautiful apartment building that became a snipers' nest has been preserved in remembrance of a civil war most Lebanese would prefer to forget

"Places have some kind of memory," the late writer WG Sebald once told me, "in that they activate memory in those who look at them. It's an old notion: this isn't a good house, because bad things have happened in it."

These words came to mind as I had a preview tour of Beit Beirut (Beirut House), a ruined beauty of a Levantine apartment building, in the Lebanese capital's Ashrafieh district, that is to become an extraordinary Museum of Memory. A four-storey landmark on the corner of Independence Avenue and Damascus Road, its yellow walls are pitted and pockmarked by bullets and mortars from the civil war of 1975-1990. Earmarked as a centre for modern urban history, from when Beirut was the "Paris of the East", the building - formerly known as Beit Barakat or the Yellow House - will also be Lebanon's first publicly funded museum of the civil war that ended 25 years ago.

Strategically located on the former Green Line, a no-man's land sundering Christian East Beirut from the largely Muslim west of a divided city, this residential building with graceful colonnaded verandas was fortified into a terrifying war machine. Even derelict, it is remembered by many Beirutis as having been for 17 years an impregnable snipers' lair - a random dispenser of death.

The museum is not due to open until next spring, but I visited the site with its architect, Youssef Haidar. The structural renovation is complete, yet its war scars remain. "I always considered the building as a living Lebanese person with traces

we all have - some visible, some hidden," Haidar says. "It's beautiful and unique, and has so much to tell us."

He avoided a "facelift", to show its age and experience. Built in 1924-1932, Beit Barakat was the work of two architects, first Youssef Aftimos and then Fouad Kozah, who added the top two floors. Its eclectic, neo-Ottoman and Art Deco style is a testimony to Beirut's cosmopolitan openness. It also marks a historic transition from hand-engraved sandstone to ochre-painted concrete - hence "yellow-house" style.

Of the eight apartments, four were rented out. A Palestinian Christian family lived opposite a Maronite dentist - supposedly

opposing factions when war broke out. After residents fled in 1975, snipers squatted amid the high-ceilinged splendour and bourgeois fittings - of which curtains, colourful Art Deco tiles and other traces remain. Snipers working in shifts were paid by the head and considered themselves heroes.

With the first-floor memorial to the snipers' nests, Haidar says "we stopped time", stabilising the shell-damaged plaster and bullet-holes with as much care as precious frescoes. Prosthetics are in contrasting grey metal. This distinction pays off, since it is actuality that chills, not pastiche or reconstruction.

The corner building's unique

architecture, with a central void, afforded all the apartments views over the street. These transparent visual axes became lines of fire. Snipers destroyed elegant staircases to widen sight lines and boxed themselves in behind two-metre-thick walls, shooting through wooden slits across the building's interior and out the other side, without ever risking exposure. Decoy silhouettes painted on walls drew futile bullets.

The \$20m renovation allows the building to tell its own story while adding all the paraphernalia of a modern museum, from basement archives to rooftop café. The second floor will display objects abandoned when residents fled in 1975 and tell the story of the pre-war city. During the works, 60,000 negatives of the neighbourhood were unearthed from a resident photographer's shop. As we speak, the architect receives a message on his phone which he says is from one of the snipers they have been trying to trace. Off-duty snipers would air their doubts and feelings on walls, in fragmented graffiti diaries, under aliases such as Begin or Katol - including words to Gilbert, a presumed gay love.

After the stifling den, which leads the visitor into the mind of a sniper - his boredom, fear and perhaps delusion of omnipotence - I reached the airy top-floor veranda with a sense of deliverance. For Haidar, the goals are nothing short of catharsis and reconciliation. A Beirut who trained in Paris, he left for France for 15 years after the Israeli invasion of 1982, "and tried to forget - but you can't".

When he returned, Beit Barakat was facing demolition.





Echoes of slaughter: the Museum of Memory, above in 1998 and left as it is today, will be Lebanon's first publicly funded museum of its civil war

The municipality purchased it after a lengthy campaign, led by architect Mona Hallak.

Beirut's cultural heritage has been under siege, first by warlords then by real-estate developers pushing the high-rise redevelopment of the damaged city centre. A postwar amnesty in 1991 - which covered the snipers - fuelled amnesia about what novelist Hanan al-Shaykh described in *Beirut Blues* (1992) as a "demons' playground". Beirutis, al-Shaykh once told me, "don't want to think of the days when they were so frightened; when the city was under a spell, a plague". For

Haidar, "we're wiping certain layers of memory".

South of the house, Dr Mohammed al-Khatib leads me through the overcrowded squalor of Shatila refugee camp, past young children playing in a derelict car. Down an alley with tangled overhead wires, his own Museum of Memories has an Arabic sign on the door: "For every piece there is a story and in every corner there is a sadness." The dimly-lit, L-shaped space, which floods when it rains, is filled with a thousand objects relating to the Palestinian nakba, or "catastrophe", of 1948.

Al-Khatib, a poet and playwright, says "I wanted to do

something for my home, so I collect pieces people brought with them from Palestine. Every object has something to say." Al-Khatib likes to show "the other face of the camp". Among the objects are kettles, pots and farming tools; the sole 1940s radio from a village; Mahmoud Darwish's poems; and poignantly redundant house keys. There is a sewing machine his mother used to earn money for his medical studies, saying, "If you have no land, I can only give you education." Qualifying in Spain, he came to work at the camp hospital in 1979. In a glass cabinet is a hatchet he says was one of five found in the camp

after the 1982 Sabra-Shatila massacres, when he escaped from the hospital with his life.

Shatila's Museum of Memories attests to a reality many Beirutis and others would prefer not to remember. If, as the Lebanese novelist Elias Khoury writes, memory is "the process of organising what to forget", Shatila's painstaking souvenirs are still struggling against oblivion.



By Maya Jaggi

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DIGITAL RADIO, HI-FI QUALITY

A Fifties look for a thoroughly modern music system, a slow juicer to savour and the wearable fitness intelligence guide

Graham Boynton

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When the original Ruark R1 was released just over 10 years ago it was hailed by a British national newspaper as the Aston Martin of DAB radios. This presumably alluded to its aesthetic beauty in a market that was, and remains, dominated by functional plastic items that are high on tech but low on taste. The next generation of Ruark DAB radios, of which the R2 Mark III is one, have retained the founders' high-minded aesthetics while at the same time marching forward relentlessly on the technological front.

I shall elaborate, but first it is important to know that this Kent-based company started out as producers of highly regarded loudspeakers developed by Alan O'Rourke, who is both an engineer and a lifelong music enthusiast. Together with his partner Neil Adams, O'Rourke decided to branch out into DAB radios 10 years ago because he found the sound reproduction in the new

generation of radio was not up to hi-fi standards. And that is why Ruark radios are different.

So the Ruark R2 Mark III Multi-room Music System, to give it its full title, offers DAB and DAB+ (the new sharper-sounding improved version), FM, internet radio, Bluetooth and Spotify Connect, all encased in a beautiful walnut cabinet that, like most of Ruark's products, harks back to 1950s design. The sound

produced from both DAB and FM radio signals is rich and warm, a result no doubt of the incorporated speaker technology. Ruark also claims that its aerials are the best in modern radio and, if the FM reception I've been getting is anything to go by, I would have to agree.

However it is the addition of Bluetooth that ups the game here, transforming your desktop radio into an agreeable

Retrofuturistic: The Ruark R2 Mark III Multi-room Music System



and perfectly acceptable hi fi system when connected to your iPhone or Android. (It can also connect by wire, thus acting as a charger as well.) It also means that you can stream radio stations from around the world. Also, several Ruark R2s can be connected to the same network thereby providing you with a multi-room audio system. At €560 it is not cheap but it is a sound system that will last a lifetime.

Hurom Slow Juicer

If you want your juices to last longer and retain more nutrients you need a masticating juicer or a slow juicer rather than the common centrifugal juicer. For this reason the Hurom Slow Juicers are getting rave reviews this summer. They operate at a low 80rpm and use only 150 watts of energy compared with 1,000-plus RPM and 1,500 watts for the centrifugal juicers. They use a patented

Low Speed Technology System (LKSTS) that allows maximum release of nutrients and enzymes and results in vivid, richer-coloured juices that retain more vitamins, minerals and natural flavour. Huroms are easy to clean, by running water through them, and disassemble for a thorough scrub.

The Hurom comes in three models – the HE Series (€420), HH Series (€560) and the HF Series (€700).



Jawbone UP 24

Now we are all trekking, jogging, and sprinting in the name of health and fitness, it's time to look again at a fitness tracker/ The latest Jawbone update, the UP 24, has the advantage of looking like a reasonably attractive wrist adornment, and it is a lot cheaper than the FitBit Surge (€175 compared with €278) featured in this column earlier in the summer. For this you get a device that gives you data in real time by

syncing with Bluetooth Smart on iPhones and Androids, which means you don't have to plug the band into a computer to sync the data. While still focusing on step-counting information and sleep data, the UP 24 introduces

recommendations in the form of information cards that appear on your UP news stream after four or five days' input. So it's a wearable fitness intelligence guide.



TRUE TO ONE'S SELFIE

Nothing is quite what we expect in a Christie's exhibition that confronts us with the sheer strangeness of the self



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At its most banal, a self-portrait is a simple proof or assertion of existence. "I'm (still) here" - the refrain of Rory Bremner's impersonation of former British Prime Minister John Major - might be the motto of the majority of selfies. One step beyond assertion of existence is self-dramatisation: "Here I am, playing this character."

This slightly more sophisticated move is in evidence when you see someone artfully posing for a selfie, with, say, a soulful expression, draped around a willow tree, staring at a brook. This could be self-portrait as incipient Ophelia, a rebuking reminder. Beyond that, of course, there is the self-portrait as self-scrutiny and self-revelation, the gaze that invites the viewer in, past veils and layers of defence, as in the greatest series of self-portraits ever painted, nearly 400 years ago in Amsterdam.

Rembrandt is represented in the splendidly thoughtful and thought-provoking exhibition *Reflections on the Self* at Christie's Mayfair (until 5 September) curated by Cristian Albu and Jacob Uecker - though rather quirkily by five small prints, two showing the artist pulling faces. This isn't quite the Rembrandt we expect. But then nothing in the show is quite what we expect.

The history of the self-portrait as we know it begins with

Albrecht Dürer, and his portrait of himself resembling Christ has never been surpassed for sheer boldness and electricity. It appears here at one remove, mediated through the enigmatic photograph *Alte Pinakothek, Self-Portrait Munich* (2000) by Thomas Struth, in which the artist appears as an anonymous figure in a blue jacket, with his back turned to us and hands in his pockets, looking at the Dürer, though with what expression we can only imagine. He could be anybody, a tourist, a curator, a gallery assistant.

Albu and Uecker's focus is the late 20th- and early 21st-century self-portrait and its dialogue with the great tradition of the past. The second room is full of recent masterpieces - four fine Freuds, a dense Kossoff with some of the thickest impasto I have seen and, above all, a magnificent large Frank Auerbach drawing, in which a monumental effect is achieved through the most minimal of marks. All of these are in a relatively uncomplicated relationship with the old masters. As you proceed through the show, however, the challenge and disruption increase. The multiple personae of Andy Warhol and Cindy Sherman disturb the idea of a single identity. Other remarkable works question the notion of the face as the primary locus of self-portraiture and self-revelation.

Kippenberger's *Untitled* shows the artist's writhing, bloody-looking hands thrust towards the viewer, perhaps in accusation or self-loathing; the effect is both histrionically Shakespearean - a mixture of the murderous Macbeths and Hamlet's disillusioned view of hands as "pickers and stealers"



A mirror on their worlds: from top, Andy Warhol's *Self-Portrait in Fright Wig* (1986), Leon Kossoff's *Head of Man* (1964) and Rembrandt's *Self-Portrait in a Cap* (1630)

- and startlingly modern; at the same time in the context of the show the painting gestures back towards the utterly different, serene, guilt-free drawing of the artist's hands by Henry Moore.

Some of the women artists in the show also reject the relatively controlled and authoritative face in favour of the unclothed, sometimes abandoned-looking body. For me one of the most beautiful and haunting images is Francesca Woodman's portrait of herself naked, in a semi-fetal position, half-encircling an eel in a bucket, as elusive, enigmatic and economical as a hexagram from the *I Ching* (though much more erotic). Jenny Saville's huge self-portrait is disturbing in its sheer overwhelming fleshiness, but also suggests an oceanic intra-uterine state, as far removed as you could possibly get from the wry, humorous, utterly assured self-image by the 18th-century Swiss-French artist Jean Etienne Liotard.

One of the joys of this show is unexpected trouvailles such as the Liotard, two remarkable, glum self-portrait prints by Edvard Munch, a startlingly assured early Hockney and a vulnerable Lowry self-portrait with wide-open eyes.

But there is also a thesis here. Have we definitively passed the age of the heroic, Rembrandtian self, predicated on depth and singularity, and entered into a new, more ironic, more unstable era? Certainly the mischievous and self-mocking self-portrait sculptures by Maurizio Cattelan suggest that view. Or have we finally recognised the sheer unrecognisable strangeness of the self - the truth of Rimbaud's troubling assertion "je est un autre"?

WHERE, WHY AND HOW

This concise and useful primer on geo-politics shows the ways geography shapes not just history but human destiny

Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps that Tell You Everything You Need to Know About Global Politics

by Tim Marshall, with a
foreword by Sir John Scarlett
Elliott & Thompson (£24)



In 2012, as Syria descended into full-scale civil war, Tim Marshall stood on a hilltop, watching smoke rise over a hamlet in the

distance. Such sights were common and Marshall did not think it especially significant - until his Syrian friends explained why that village in particular was burning.

The attack had come from a much larger settlement a mile away. If one faction could push the other out of the valley, the valley could be attached to another strip of land that led to the motorway. That in itself would be strategically useful, but the attackers had a more long-term plan: if Syria could not be reconstructed as a unitary state, the area could form the nucleus of a future mini-state.

Just as happened during the Yugoslav wars, the local potentates were already planning their empires, to be built through ethnic cleansing and massacres. "Where before I saw only a burning hamlet," writes Marshall, "I could now see its strategic importance and understand how political realities are shaped by the most basic physical realities."

Marshall, a former diplomatic editor at Sky News and BBC reporter, has solid credentials to write *Prisoners of Geography*. He has covered conflicts and upheavals in 30 countries, including Afghanistan, the

former Yugoslavia, Iraq and across the Middle East. His blog, Foreign Matters, was shortlisted for the 2010 Orwell Prize. His approach is simple but effective. Ten chapters, each accompanied by a map, cover the world's regions and global powers. Each shows how geography shapes not just history but destiny. In an ever more complex, chaotic and interlinked world, *Prisoners of Geography* is an concise and useful primer on geo-politics.

Marshall is not afraid to ask

tough questions and provide sharp answers. Why is Africa, the cradle of human civilisation, in such a mess? "There are lots of places that are unsuccessful but few have been as unsuccessful as Africa, and that despite having a head start as the place where Homo Sapiens originated about 200,000 years ago."

Two reasons for this, argues Marshall, are the lack of natural harbours - in contrast, for example, to the Mediterranean - and waterfalls. Africa has

numerous great rivers, but they are, says Marshall "rubbish for actually transporting anything" because of frequent waterfalls.

Over the centuries, the Rhine, and especially the Danube, which runs through numerous countries, have helped Europe prosper and unify. In contrast, Africa's great rivers, the Nile, the Niger, the Congo and the Zambezi, don't connect. Most of Africa's land mass is framed by the Sahara and the Indian and Atlantic Ocean, thus further isolating the inhabited areas from outside technology and intellectual currents.

Layered on top of this isolation is the catastrophic legacy of colonialism. Marshall's analysis of Africa's political woes could apply word for word to the Middle East. "The modern civil wars are now partially because the colonialists told different nations that they were one nation in one state and then after the colonialists were chased out a dominant people emerged within the state who wanted to rule it all, thus ensuring violence."

And when the West destroys the state that it imposed, it fails to build a substitute. When the United States and its allies invaded Iraq in 2003, the military aspect was thoroughly planned, but the aftermath was not. The coalition had failed to learn the lesson of the collapse of communism in 1989: the more repressive the dictatorship, the greater the violence that will follow its removal. Hungary, once dubbed "the happiest barracks" thanks to its relatively liberal dictatorship, enjoyed a peaceful transition to democracy. The removal of the maniacal Nicolae Ceausescu saw violence and bloodshed.

The removal of Saddam Hussein, followed by the



Maps that matter: as the ice retreats the Arctic Ocean, above, is key. Top right, why Africa doesn't connect. Right, the course of the Danube



conflict, the book would have benefited from either expanding this section - the Middle East has 34 pages - or adding a separate section on Eastern Europe. For a work of reference, the source material, listed in the bibliography can seem meagre: the chapter on Korea and Japan, for example, cites just two sources. But thankfully there is an index, all too rare nowadays.

The book also looks usefully to the future. The last chapter deals with the Arctic, whose vast resources are increasingly coveted, competed over and may yet be fought over. The Arctic is rich in gas and oil. Gold, zinc, nickel and iron have also been found. "When the Icemen come, they will come in force," writes Marshall, and they will be speaking Russian. "All other nations are lagging behind, and, in the case of the USA do not even appear to be trying to catch up. America is an Arctic nation without an Arctic strategy in a region that is heating up."

Heating up literally, as well as metaphorically. The melting of the ice-cap now allows ships to make the journey through the North-West Passage in the Canadian archipelago for several weeks each year. The polar route is 40% shorter than going through the Panama canal. There are already nine legal disputes and claims over sovereignty in the Arctic Ocean. Russia has even planted a rust-proof titanium flag 13,980 feet down to mark its claim. *Prisoners of Geography* helps explain why.

By Adam LeBor
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His latest thriller is *The Washington Stratagem*
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dismantling of the Iraqi army, perhaps the one institution that could have held the country together, triggered the collapse of the state, a civil war and the rise of Isis. Astonishingly, Western powers proceeded to make the same mistake in Libya in 2011, deposing Colonel Gaddafi, then walking away. The result may be seen in the boats full of refugees landing in Italy.

Marshall is sharp on Western perceptions of the Arab world, and how well-meaning liberals bring their cultural baggage to a region with utterly alien social mores. "The Arab countries are beset by prejudices, indeed hatreds of which the average Westerner knows so little that they tend not to believe them even if they are laid out in print before their eyes." Anti-Semitic cartoons, which echo Nazi propaganda, are endemic across the Arab media.

Instead of condemning such imagery, Western liberals stay

silent, for fear of succumbing to “Orientalism”, judging Arab culture through Western eyes. Incitement to murder, they say, must be viewed in the context of the Arabic language and its love for flighty rhetoric. But when people who are full of hatred say something, writes Marshall,

they mean it, as the internet's ever-expanding atrocity exhibition bears witness.

Occasionally, the material can feel skimpy. Western Europe has 20 pages, as much as Korea and Japan. While Marshall does discuss Poland's flexible frontiers and the Yugoslav



FASHION CHANGES, STYLE IS FOR EVER

International icon Iris Apfel is celebrated in a new documentary for the sheer panache with which the 93-year-old has illuminated the world of clothes



Alice Hart-Davis
 @AliceHartDavis

In the age-old fashion v style debate, it has become a cliché that style never goes out of fashion. It may be true, but the idea of “timeless style” tends to conjure up images that are awfully dull; of “safe” colours and unchallenging shapes.

All of which makes *Iris*, a documentary film celebrating the life of 93-year-old international style icon Iris Apfel, all the more wonderful. Apfel's outfits are the antithesis of dull. Her signature look involves lilac-rinsed white hair, spectacles with oversized round

frames, clothing in exuberant prints and textures and, always, a surfeit of necklaces and bangles. “Another mad outfit,” she observes drily of one typical ensemble.

How has she become so famous? It's been a long slow burn over a lifetime in fashion. She went to art school, she worked for *Women's Wear Daily*, and her sheer panache with what she wore marked her out from the start.

She recalls working at Loehmann's department store in New York and Mrs Loehmann, the founder (who “looked like something out of Toulouse-Lautrec and would sit on a high stool like a tennis umpire”) fixating on her, and saying: “Young lady, I've been watching you. You're not pretty, you'll never be pretty. It doesn't matter. You have something much better. You have style.”

That may be what confirmed her instinct for bold clothing. “Life is grey and dull, you might as well have a little fun when you dress and amuse people.”

What really raised her profile was *Rare Bird of Fashion*, an exhibition of her outfits and accessories at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2005 - she is acknowledged to have one of the best collections of couture costume jewellery in the USA.

“Iris is an artist,” says Harold Koda, curator in charge of the Costume Institute at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. “What she uses all of her clothes and accessories to do is compose a new image. That, for me, is creativity. Other people would say it's just getting dressed...”

She has always been a hoarder of pieces she loves; looking at her wedding photographs from 1948, she muses that she still has, in a box somewhere, the pink satin



Iris Apfel: “I don't have any rules. I'd only be breaking them”

shoes she wore that day. Her magpie eye for pretty things started aged 11, when she saved up 65¢ to buy a brooch from “an Aladdin's cave” of a shop in Greenwich Village. The film shows old photos of her and her husband Carl travelling the world, haggling with vendors for cloth - for their textile company, Old World Weavers, which made exact reproductions of 17th- to 20th-century fabrics - and necklaces. She still haggles for things

that catch her eye on street stalls in New York and takes as much care composing her outfits. What's her secret? “I like individuality,” she says. “So much of that is lost these days.” But anyone looking to Apfel for a style prescription will be disappointed. “I don't have any rules,” she says. “I'd only be breaking them. With me, it's not intellectual, it's all gut. I see something and I try it on. It's the process I like, even more than the wearing of it.”

Granny chic rules

The current old-is-cool trend can almost certainly be traced back to Apfel's influence. When Josh Wood, one of the world's top hair colourists, dyed his models' hair grey for the Louis Vuitton Spring/Summer 2012 show, it looked shocking, but new. Then the oldies moved into mainstream big-name advertising campaigns; writer Joan Didion, now 84, for Celine, Sicilian grannies for Dolce e Gabbana, and Apfel herself starred in a campaign for Kate Spade earlier this year. Now the leaders of youth style - models Cara Delevingne and Kylie Jenner, and singers Rita Ora, Lady Gaga and Kelly Osborne - are all playing around with grey hair.



PUTTERING INTO THE ELECTRIC FUTURE

It's the car of tomorrow but – as a 2,000km test drive of the Tesla Model S proves – today's challenge is still to get from one charge point to the next

It's the quiet that gets you. You put your foot down and there's no roar, no kick forward. It's like being inside a shark that has flicked its tail underwater and is suddenly, soundlessly, moving very much faster. The reason is there's no internal combustion engine. The Tesla Model S (with 362hp) runs off a big battery under the seats.

Everyone knows that electric cars more or less work – the big question is how far they can practically go. To test that, I drove one from London to Lesparre, a small town in the marshy, wine-producing flatlands of the Médoc, and back, a distance of some 2,000km. The stated range is about 400km, so you have to stop at an incipient network of Supercharge points strung across affluent parts of Europe. You put your destination into the vast own-brand iPad that controls the thing and it plots your route via these points, calculating how long you need to stop at each (a full charge takes about an hour).

What's surprising is how practical it already is – or seems. So I got across the Channel and rather recklessly starting driving the way the car's styling makes you want to: barrelling silent and powerful

past the lesser fish, accelerating out of the bends, down the slopes, up the hills. And that's why it all went wrong.

One of those low-battery symbols from your smartphone flashed up, with the deadpan message that if I didn't slow down, I wouldn't reach my destination. Lest you think I'm some horrible petrolhead, I was doing at most 140kph. And I was worried. The prospect of running out of juice in the no-man's lands of Normandy was pretty bleak. I could imagine the mechanics' smirks about the hubris and general foolishness of this vehicle. So I slowed to a limp and, as every horse box and family wagon in northern France overtook me, carefully kept my charge consumption rate below what would drive me to disaster.

This set the tone for the rest of the trip. I soon learned that, if you drive above a certain speed (120ishkph), any gains you make on the road are more than cancelled out by longer stops at the charge stations. What is fun though is that these stations are in hotel car parks, and the hotels become ever grander the further south you go. The first was a nasty Ibis in the Calais wastelands. The next was an Art Deco villa outside

Tours, where the car cooled under low-hanging bruised-pink wisteria. My furthest south was a medieval fantasia with ponds, peacocks and a Michelin-starred restaurant, where I was softened up with a coffee – free for Tesla pilots – and spent a river of gold on some mysteriously decorated asparagus. At least the charging itself is free, though the car is about €110,000.

At these points, you keep running into the same people, and that makes you feel like the member of glamorous club from the pioneering days of motoring. You give them a tip of the cap and expect to see them at Senlis or Saintes or Brive-la-Galliarde. Every one I spoke to was in love with his car.

I did make it to Lesparre, and spent a week cruising the town to the amazement of the locals, all of whom – along with every customs officer and toll-booth attendant and ferryman – wanted to marvel at this marvellous machine.

Having digested the lessons of the trip down – mainly that you'd be mad not to start with a full charge – I decided to make the trip back up in one day.

I drove sensibly, maximising overall speed by restricting immediate speed. When it

rained, the car turned on the wipers. When I went through a tunnel, the car turned on the lights. When I came up behind someone, on cruise control, the car slowed down; when I pulled out, it sped up. When I drifted off my lane, it rumbled at me. In fact, it became clear that the only thing stopping the car doing the driving itself was the law's dubious belief that I could do it better.

After many weary miles, I reached the Channel ferry. The few hours' charging had cost me a boat or two, and not rushing about as thoughtlessly as you can with petrol probably cost me another. But in five years, or 10 years, when the range has doubled and the network is more densely stitched, it will be faster than petrol. And more: it made the combustion engine seem a clanking relic of the industrial era. This sleek silent hi-tech wonder, like a four-wheeled iPhone, seems to belong to the information age, to the now time, and to the future.



By Alex Starritt

Journalist, translator from the German and novice journalist

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MY WEEKEND – SUNIL CHATRANI

The chief executive of Elegant Hotels likes to get away from it all on the golf course and chill out with Rihanna, massage and trips to the drive-in

Friday evening

Normally I would go with a few of my colleagues and people within the industry for a few afternoon drinks and talk about the business we're in and politics. On Barbados, where I live, we call it after-hours "liming" - it's just a group of friends getting together and having a few drinks.

Saturday morning

I usually get up a little bit later than usual, around seven, or half past, and I will laze around the house a little bit. On Saturday morning I'll try to catch up on work. But I try not to spend too much time on it. I'll spend some time with my wife and kids. My son is 19 and studying finance, my daughter is 23 and studies architecture. They both study in Canada, but they come home three or four times a year. We'll probably all go out somewhere for breakfast, then I'll head to the golf course. It's what I call my selfish time.

Saturday afternoon

I spend a lot of time playing golf on the weekend, normally with a big group of friends. We all like good healthy competition, and obviously there's some betting. Golf takes you away from everything else, and there's the peacefulness of being on the course. I'm a decent golfer.



Chatrani: "Barbados can be as relaxing or as fast-paced as you want"

Every year I will get away with a group of guys and we'll try to play the professional courses. This year it's the PGA National West Palm Beach, in Florida.

Saturday evening

My wife and I will always go for dinner somewhere. We eat lots of seafood generally. Then an early night. I was born in Guyana, but Barbados is now my home. What I like about it is that it can be as relaxing or as fast-paced as you want it to be.

On the weekend, you can slow it right down and just relax on the beach. That's what my kids do - it's straight from the airport to the beach for them.

I do love my music, I always keep up to date with whatever's in the charts - usually pop. I'm a big fan of Rihanna, particularly as she is from Barbados. It keeps me young!

Sunday morning

I'll try to go to the gym, then I'll do things with my wife, such as

Curriculum vitae

Originally from Guyana, Sunil Chatrani is now president of the Barbados Hotel & Tourism Association. Before becoming CEO of the Elegant Hotels Group in 2013, he was CEO of Bahamas Supermarkets and COO of the Barbados Trading and Shipping Company.

visiting friends or family, or just spending time with the kids. Then we might go out for a family lunch. I'm not a very good cook, but my wife is a great cook. She's Indian so she cooks great traditional Indian dishes.

Sunday evening

My wife and I will have a masseuse come over for a nice massage. That winds me down for the week. Once in a while we'll go to the movies - we still have a drive-in cinema here. My wife and I are celebrating our 25th wedding anniversary this month. We've decided on something low-key, perhaps dinner. But I get back from business the day before - so I'll have to prepare in advance! I don't mind travelling, but as soon as I step off the plane in Barbados, it's great to be home. *As told to Felicity Capon*

NEWS WEEKS PAST 30 JULY 1973

President caught red-handed

"Mr Butterfield, are you aware of the installation of any listening devices in the Oval Office?" "I was aware of listening devices." With that flat preamble, the cornucopia of disasters called Watergate spilled out yet another bit of stunning news last week -

and threatened to make Richard Nixon's last line of defence untenable. The agent of his latest embarrassment was an ex-staffer named Alexander Butterfield, who ruefully admitted that Mr Nixon - in the interests of history - had been secretly taping everything said in his offices for



at least two years. The testimony suggested that Mr Nixon had been sitting on a trove of hard evidence of his guilt or innocence in the scandals, and it loosed very nearly irresistible pressures to surrender it. "If he doesn't," one White House higher-up said glumly, "I think he is dead."



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